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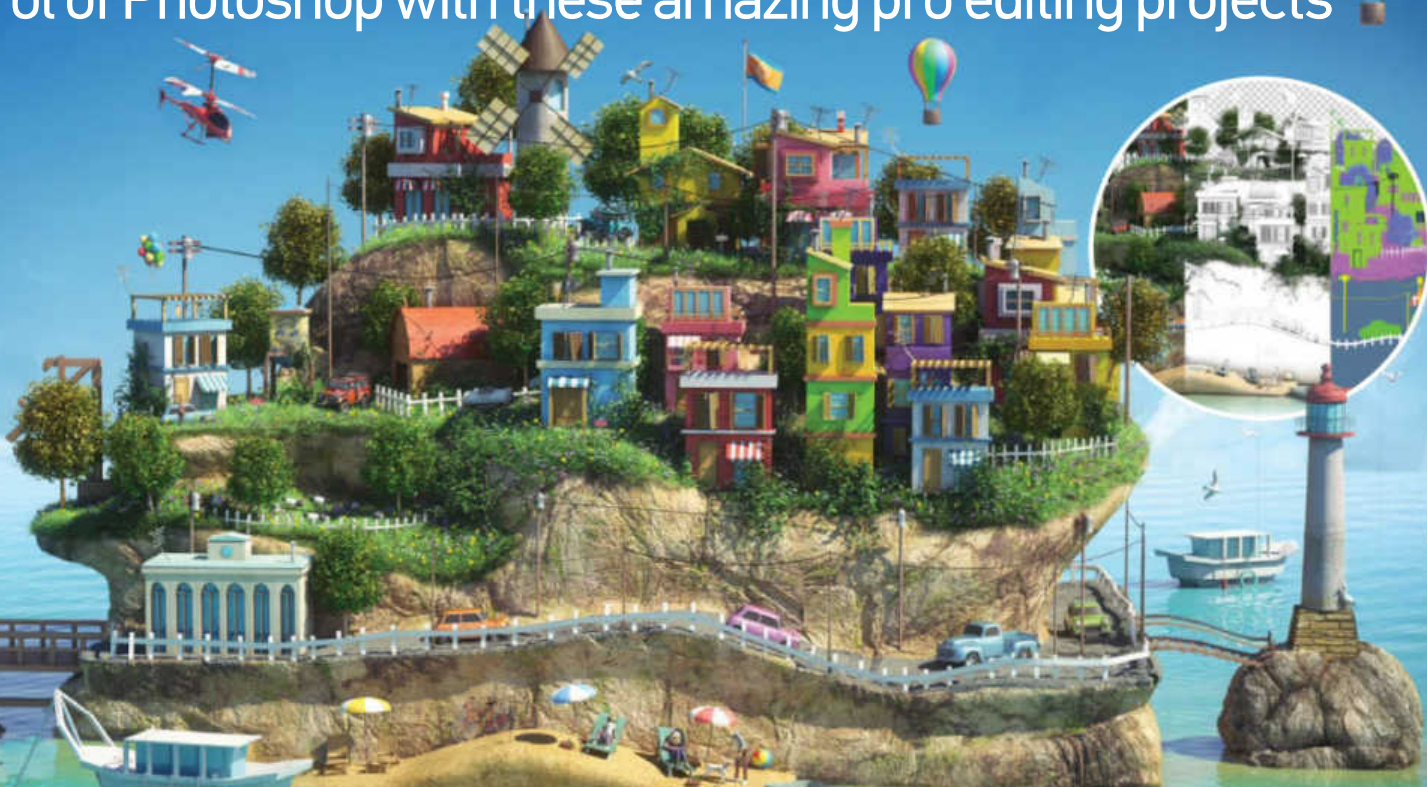
ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP®

The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® professionals 139

MASTER POST-PRODUCTION FOR INCREDIBLE ART

Take control of Photoshop with these amazing pro editing projects

20
EXPERT
TIPS FOR
VECTORS



+ Expert retouch techniques



+ Enhance your arch-vis



+ Make CG images stand out



+ Amazing automotive art



■ LATEST CINTIQ ON TEST:
THE COMPANION 2
Is this hybrid Windows tablet and graphics tablet the future of digital art?



DigitalEdition
GreatDigitalMags.com
ISSUE 139

■ CHARLIE BOWATER'S TRICKS
DIGITAL PAINTING
Industry expertise shared by one of Atomhawk's principal artists



+ TASTY TYPE TECHNIQUES CONTROL COLOURS & TONE LEVITATION EFFECTS MAKE INK SWIRL BRUSHES

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WORKSHOP:
PRO POST-PRODUCTION
 Discover how Lightfarm Brasil's Milton Menezes enhanced this 3D scene

IN THIS ISSUE...



APRIL MADDEN
 Editor

COVER IMAGE

AHMAD N TURKI
<http://tinyurl.com/pjtfs4>

For quicker, easier 3D post-production in Photoshop you can't beat render passes, and Ahmad N Turki demonstrates how he used them to create our beautiful cover image in our feature on p26.



Post-production is one of the most interesting industries that a Photoshop artist can go into. Despite (or perhaps because of) the fact that it can entail a daily grind of colour grading, masking and High Pass filters, it's one of the best industries for honing your skills. Scratch most creative Photoshop artists and beneath their fabulous personal work you'll find the solid foundation of the post-production workflow they use in their day jobs.

Happily you can achieve the same level of finish, and learn the skills you need to compete in the post-production industry, in our feature on p26. Here four post-production experts from around the world share their skills, advice and insights into their workflow for retouching photos, honing 3D images, creating atmospheric arch-vis and producing creative automotive art. Plus you can get a behind-the-scenes look at how Lightfarm Brasil work on their post-production projects on p36.

Elsewhere in the issue, Michael Herb explains the process behind creating a levitation effect, from how to pose and photograph your model to look like they're in mid-air, to the photomanipulation and compositing tricks you need to carry the effect off. Find it on p44.

On p54, concept artist Adam Varga walks us through his painting process, explaining how tone and colour come together to create a fantasy scene. Meanwhile on p62, illustrator Neil Duerden has some tasty tricks for 3D type to share.

With vectors becoming ever more usable in Photoshop, and Illustrator becoming even more integrated with our favourite program in the Creative Cloud suite, we've also got 20 practical and creative tips for creating a wide range of vector artwork in our feature on p72. Plus we review the amazing new Cintiq Companion 2 from Wacom (p80) and showcase a range of incredible artwork from artists, designers and illustrators across the globe. Enjoy the issue!

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POST-PRODUCTION



LEVITATION



PAINTING TECHNIQUES



3D TYPOGRAPHY



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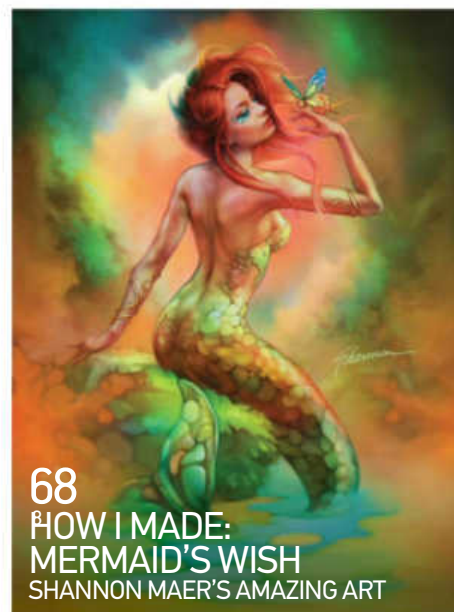
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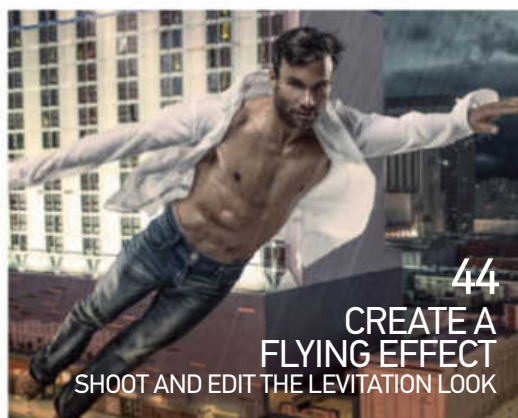
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CREATE INK SWIRL BRUSHES



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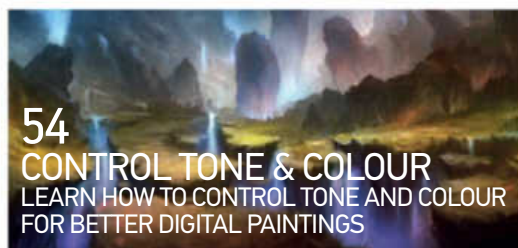
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ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP® PRO PANEL

MEET THE PROFESSIONALS SHARING THEIR PHOTOSHOP
EXPERTISE AND TECHNIQUES IN THIS ISSUE



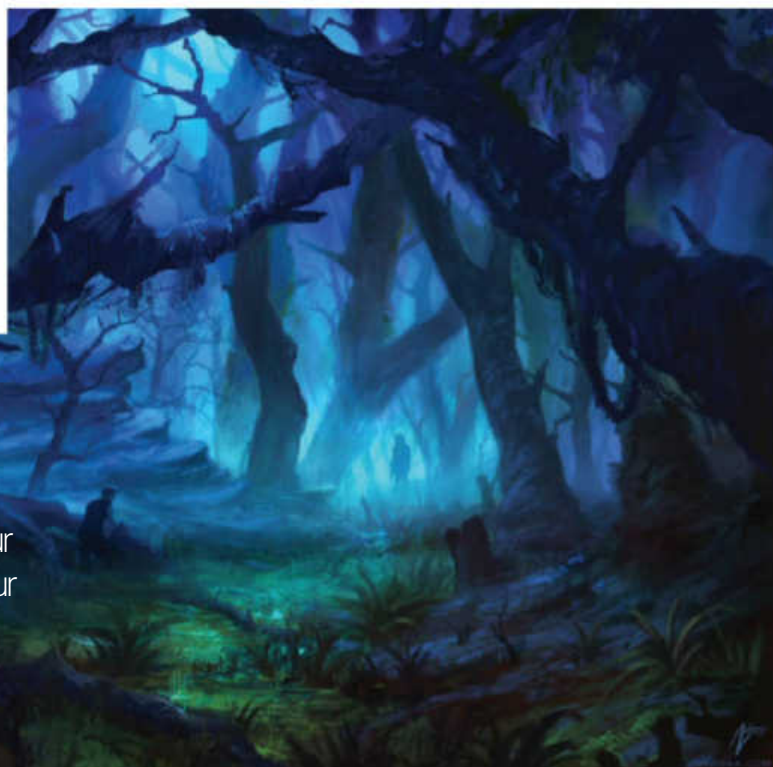
ADAM VARGA

www.vargaa.com

Adding a figure to a landscape can enhance the story and draw the viewer's attention towards a focal point. Remember, scale is not as important as harmony when it comes to depicting a figure.

In this particular piece, the mood is eerie and somewhat ominous already, so placing a masked man wielding a weapon adds to the creepy factor.

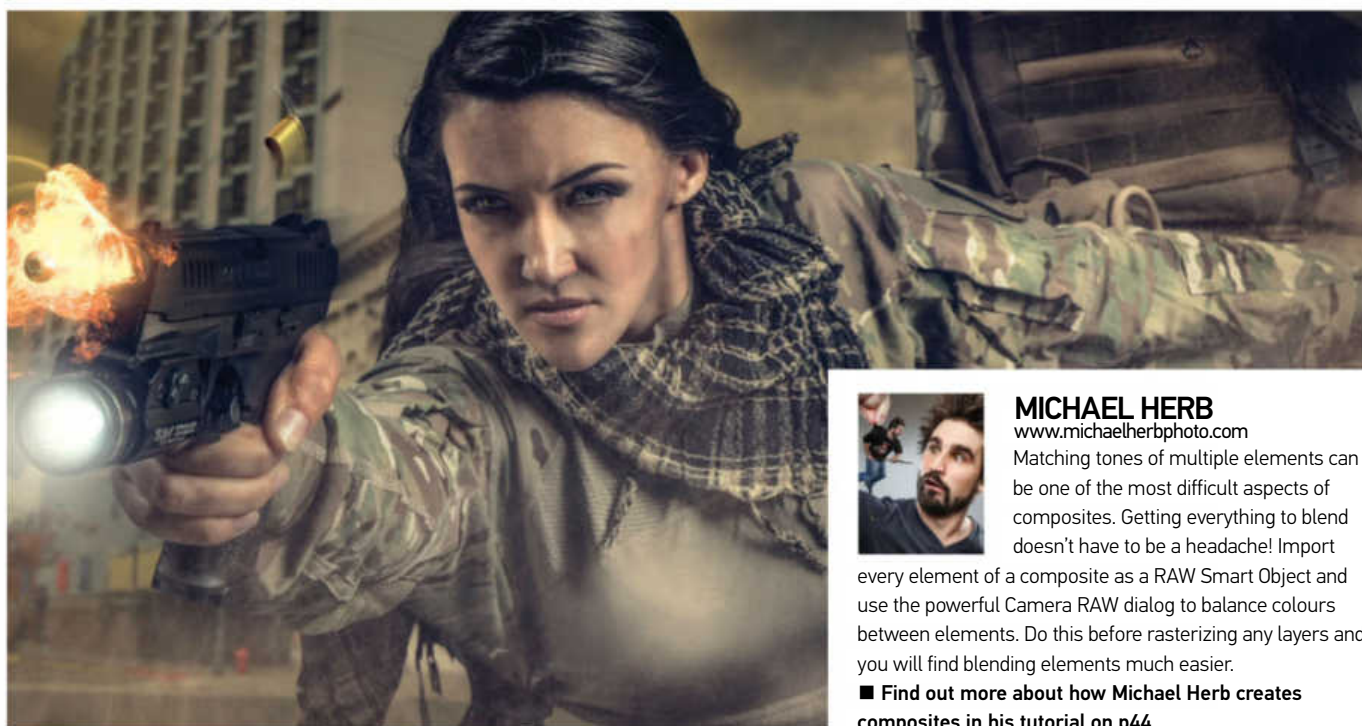
■ Discover more pro painting techniques from Adam Varga as he walks us through one of his images on p54



“Always remember the purpose of your artwork. In the commercial sector your work has to be functional and create the required message for the client”

NEIL DUERDEN / WWW.NEILDUERDEN.CO.UK

© Adam Varga



© Michael Herb



MICHAEL HERB

www.michaelherbphoto.com

Matching tones of multiple elements can be one of the most difficult aspects of composites. Getting everything to blend doesn't have to be a headache! Import

every element of a composite as a RAW Smart Object and use the powerful Camera RAW dialog to balance colours between elements. Do this before rasterizing any layers and you will find blending elements much easier.

■ Find out more about how Michael Herb creates composites in his tutorial on p44



MILTON MENEZES
www.lightfarmbrasil.com

One of the best-hidden tips in Photoshop for the majority of users is Blend If. Blend If is hidden under Blending Options in the Layer Style window. You can find it by double-clicking a layer and then adjusting the levels of black and white of your layer and the underlying layers. The master tip here is to use Alt to separate the cursors so you can have smoother transitions. Without using the Alt button, this tool is not helpful. Once you master Blend If, the possibilities are as big as your creativity. I use it all the time!

■ Get more expert Photoshop tips from Milton Menezes as he explains his post-production process on p36



© Milton Menezes



NEIL DUERDEN
www.neilduerden.co.uk

Always remember the purpose of your artwork. In the commercial sector your work has to be functional and create the required message for the client. This has to conform to their corporate image, yet deliver the message in a creative and interesting way that will stand clear of the competition. Remember creativity for no reason will not serve the purpose and at the end of the day they are the ones paying the bills.

■ Learn more from Neil Duerden's industry expertise in his tutorial on p62



© Neil Duerden

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TOP ARTISTS SHARE THEIR SECRETS IN NEW WACOM PROJECT

WACOM'S CREATE MORE CAMPAIGN FEATURES SEVERAL SOUGHT AFTER ARTISTS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE. THE BRILLIANT ARTISTS SHARE THE SECRETS TO THEIR SUCCESS AND CREATIVE KNOWLEDGE

On 15th July 2015, Wacom launched its Create More campaign. The campaign itself targets both professionals and enthusiasts in the fields of illustration and photography.

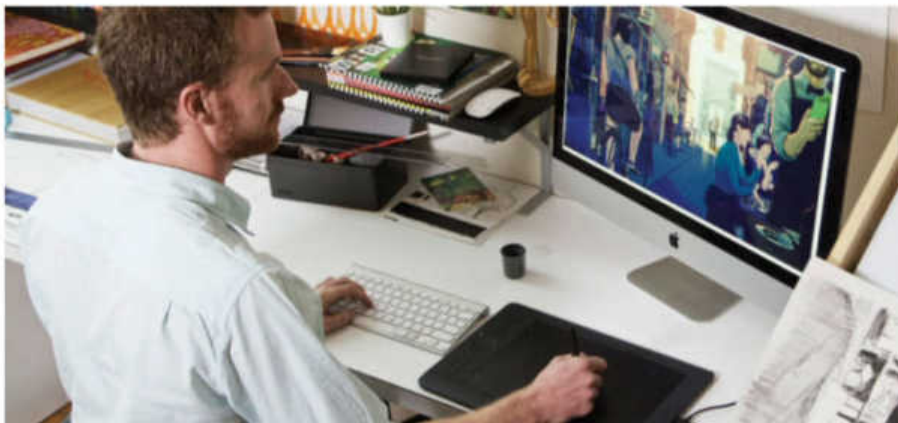
Create More showcases 11 of the world's top artists including: Benjamin Von Wong, a visual engineer and illustrator from Canada, Lithuanian digital artist and photographer Natalie Shau, Miss Led, an illustrator from the UK, American comic book artist Brooke Allen, Robert Hranitzky, a German photographer and motion designer, Crystal Kung, an illustrator from Taiwan, Chilean cartoonist Alberto Montt, Ohagi, a Japanese illustrator, Australian illustrator Guy Shield, photographer and digital artist Adrian Sommeling from the Netherlands, and Koji Yoda, a collage artist and art director from Japan.

Until 31st December 2015, the Create More campaign offers anyone who buys an Intuos Pro full access to a value pack, which includes a 30-day membership to online video training from **Lynda.com**, a free one year pro membership to AutoDesk Sketchbook, and a free software package from OnOne including Perfect Effects 9 Premium (the free edition is reviewed on p84).

"The idea for the campaign was to place these exceptional artists, along with their passions, creativity and professionalism, into the foreground of our communications. We at Wacom believe that creativity is the power that really drives the world and makes it a better and more interesting place, and are totally committed to enabling creativity through our award-winning professional tools. Our hope is that the Create More campaign will be inspirational to artists from around the world and help them create their best work yet," stated Jeff Mandell, executive vice president of branded business for Wacom.

The campaign includes links to pages featuring the artists, as well as videos, tutorials, and ebooks. This bevy of creative inspiration was developed by Wacom to help inspire artists to create more.

Currently the campaign just features Natalie Shau, Miss Led, Guy Shield, Alberto Montt and Benjamin Wong. The other artists will follow soon as the campaign continues.



You can download a complete piece of work from Natalie Shau in the original PSD format, so that you can learn how she creates her wonderful images. Additional assets can be downloaded, such as brushes, on her

“The idea for the campaign was to put the artists, along with their passion, creativity and professionalism into the foreground of our communication”

Jeff Mandell

page of the campaign. In her video Shau says, "I think knowing how to draw and how to paint always helps. When you paint you learn how to play with colours."

Robert Hranitzky's 53-page ebook, entitled *Colorize Your Old Photos*, is filled with a wealth of knowledge. By showcasing three projects, Hranitzky tells you how you can breathe life into old photographs.

London-based artist Joanna Henly (better known as Miss Led) shares a 21-page ebook, entitled *Refine And Colour A Portrait*. By learning the process behind her work, you can find inspiration to create your own portrait.

Visit the Wacom website at www.wacom.com/createmore to view the campaign and to download the resources available.

■ WACOM CONTINUES TO SHARE INSPIRATION

Wacom is not only producing technology that increases the workflow of artists, but it is continuously encouraging artists to create more. The company maintains a variety of blogs on the Wacom InfoChannel.

By visiting the Wacom InfoChannel you can learn more about campaigns such as Create More, read interviews featuring talented artists, discover various contests, find tutorials on how to create innovative art, and learn about trending themes.

Wacom's vision to bring people and technology closer to together through the means of inspiration has proven to be on target. Sharing exciting updates and information through its campaigns and the Wacom InfoChannel, the company has proven to be dedicated to helping artists evolve.

Wacom hopes to encourage artists to share their work by challenging artists to express their creativity connecting their Behance portfolios to the Wacom Gallery



WIN \$30,000 AND COMIC ART ADVICE FROM MARVEL LEGEND STAN LEE

FRESH TALENT WILL BE GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE RECOGNISED IN A SUPERHERO-INSPIRED ART CONTEST HOSTED ONLINE

Comic book legend Stan Lee and his company POW! Entertainment have partnered up with LINE Webtoon to launch a contest to find brilliant and talented comic book artists.

LINE Webtoon launched in 2014 in the US and is already successful at producing contests in Korea. The Super Hero Contest is their third contest in their Challenge League System.

"Over at LINE Webtoon we've already seen some incredible content from the Challenge League. It's amazing to see what our community has crafted and submitted and we can't wait to see even more brilliant comic work as we get closer to creating the next great superhero line with the legendary Stan Lee," stated JunKoo Kim, founder and head of LINE Webtoon.

Artists over the age of fourteen will be able to upload at least three chapters of an original superhero comic to the contest's website. The grand prizewinner will receive \$30,000 and have their work featured on the LINE Webtoon site. He or she will also receive guidance and feedback from the legendary Stan Lee himself.

"It is always a pleasure and a thrill to discover new creators and artists," stated Stan Lee. "I am looking



POW! Entertainment and LINE Webtoon: Stan Lee joins forces with JunKoo Kim, founder and head of LINE Webtoon, to produce a new contest to find the world's greatest comic book artist

forward to working with LINE Webtoon to find the talent that will create a great new Superhero!"

Sharing his knowledge with winners of the contest offers comics artists the chance of a lifetime.

Enter the contest this autumn via the LINE Webtoon website at www.webtoons.com. You can also download the official LINE Webtoon app by visiting the Apple App Store or Google Play.

PALETTE'S SENSATIONAL NEW TOOL FOR EDITING

TECHNOLOGY IS ALWAYS CHANGING AND PALETTE IS INTRODUCING A NEW DEVICE FOR EDITING THAT COULD PROVE TO BE A GAME CHANGER

Editing may become easier with the launch of Palette's new customisable modular control interface. When first viewing Palette's system you may think of a sound mixing panel or a light mix board. However, there is more to the system than you'd imagine.

Users will have the ability to set up the layout, function and colour of each control module to the needs of his or her workflow. Connecting to a computer via USB, users can add up to 18 modules. The modules are compatible with any software that has keyboard shortcuts. The dials will give artists more precision when editing their projects.

The Palette app is a quick way to assign each module according to the software that you will be using the system with. Once the setup is complete users can use the modules to directly engage with their projects. Their site also features fashion photographer Ted Belton putting the Palette to use during a photoshoot.

"After working on a custom DJ controller for a friend who had his deck stolen at a party, I realised that the advantages of these universally understood tactile controls – sliders, dials and buttons – could (and should) be exposed to the



Palette and Ted Belton: Fashion photographer Ted Belton, seen assembling his Palette modules, feels that the system enables him to quickly show people what's going on inside of his head without breaking the momentum of the shoot

broader creative community," stated Calvin Chu, founder and CEO. "While studying interface design, the realisation that everyone has a unique style, a way of working [that] allows them to perform best, led me to the notion that the ideal interface would be flexible in both form and function. We designed Palette to be modular and user configurable." Currently there are three kit sizes geared towards

starters, experts and professionals. However, Palette is working diligently on software integration, new types of modules, and developer tools. According to the Palette website, we might expect to see wireless connectivity in the future.

It has the ability to work with Mac and Windows. The Palette system is available for pre-order starting at \$199 on their website www.palettegear.com.



www.charliebowater.co.uk
@charliebowater

INSPIRATIONAL DIGITAL PAINTING

CHARLIE BOWATER IS AN INSPIRATIONAL CONCEPT ARTIST FROM THE UK WHOSE WORK HAS BEEN FEATURED IN SOME TOP-LEVEL FRANCHISES. WE CAUGHT UP WITH HER TO FIND OUT MORE

It takes a highly skilled artist to breathe life into characters and Charlie Bowater has accomplished a mastery in doing so. Being skilled in conception, composition, rendering, lighting, and more make Charlie a pro in the art world.

Born in the UK, she is now a senior concept artist at Atomhawk Design. She has played a vital role on projects such as Pottermore, Project Spark and Dead Island: Riptide. Charlie, along with Atomhawk bring forth inspirational concepts such as: characters, environments, props, vehicles and more.

YOU ARE A BRILLIANT ARTIST. WHEN DID YOU DISCOVER YOUR TALENT IN ILLUSTRATION AND WHAT DID YOU STUDY TO HONE YOUR SKILLS?

Thank you so much! I've always been interested in art, ever since I could hold a pencil as a child. I don't recall exactly when I started drawing, but I do remember it was something that was always with me growing up. I had a lot of encouragement from my family and it naturally became my ambition over the years. My love of art was nurtured over a long time, rather than [suddenly] discovered.

I was a terrible student when it came to college. I ended up studying Multimedia, I knew I wanted to go

into art, but I wasn't sure about which area exactly. I studied something that I didn't find all that interesting, but then discovered digital art at 17 years old and set out to teach myself. I spent a lot of my college classes painting and eventually set my sights on concept art and illustration.

I HAVE READ THAT YOU GREW UP ON THE CARTOONS OF THE NINETIES, ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC CARTOONS OR EVEN ILLUSTRATORS THAT HAVE HAD AN IMPACT ON YOU?

I did indeed! I watched anything and everything I could. I think Disney had the biggest impact on me, I spent a long time wanting to be an animator and go and work for Disney as kid. I eventually got to try animation for myself years later and found it wasn't for me, but the inspiration stayed with me regardless! If I picked out two things that really spurred me even further into art it would easily be *The Little Mermaid* and *Sailor Moon*, I was amazed by them.

There are far too many artists to name that have inspired me over the years, but artists like Jason Chan and Marta Dahlig had a really big impact on me when I was in college. I watched and read a lot of their tutorials. I found myself very inspired by my current peers at the time rather than classical artists, that inspiration definitely shaped my work.

HAVE YOU HAD TO OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLES AS AN ARTIST? AND IS IT CHALLENGING TO BE A WORKING ARTIST?

It's definitely challenging! Learning art in the first place can be a huge challenge, I'm glad I got an early start as a kid. The wonderful thing about art of course is that you never stop learning, so challenges are a constant companion. You just need to have plenty of inspiration to pull you through the frustration.

For me personally my biggest obstacle is time and not having enough of it. I work nine to five as a concept artist, and then freelance on a lot of illustrative work in

“Don't get too fixated on one particular style. I spent a long time getting frustrated with trying to find a style when I started out, rather than just focusing on being a better artist”

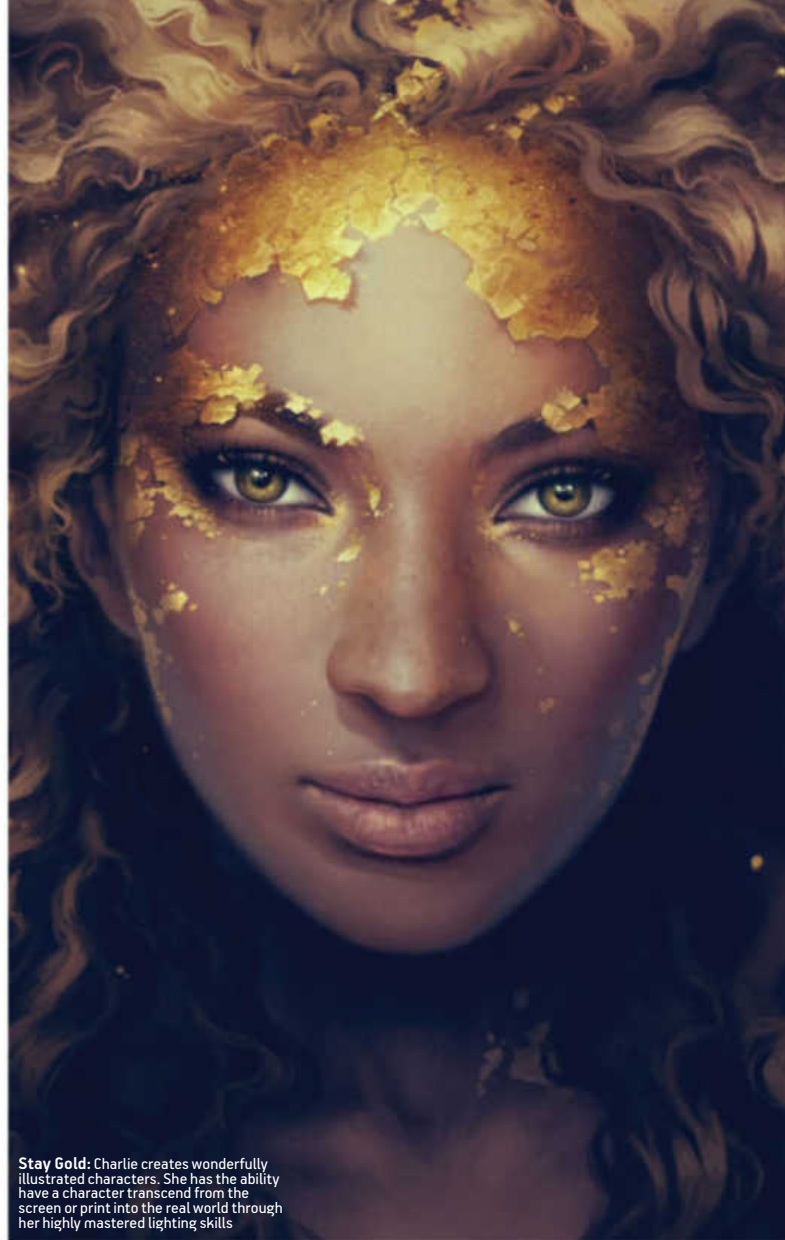
Ugly Side: Charlie often tries to capture beauty in her illustrations whether it's through lighting, characters, expressions, mood or even drapery. The great thing about art is there are so many kinds of beauty, it's all so objective



All images © Charlie Bowater



Scrap City: Creating images with backgrounds and multiple characters can be quite tricky. Charlie believes it's important to take advantage of lighting and negative space to separate the characters and have each of them stand out



Stay Gold: Charlie creates wonderfully illustrated characters. She has the ability to have a character transcend from the screen or print into the real world through her highly mastered lighting skills

“My advice would be to aim for progress and not perfection. If you want to paint characters, then paint a lot of characters!”



Howl: Darkness can really sell a character. Although your eye is drawn to the rough, unfinished areas Charlie knows the human mind fills in the gaps and allows the viewer to focus on the illuminated areas



21 Draw: You don't always need to start in black and white, but Charlie usually likes to when designing characters. She can chop and change any elements of the character in the design process, before she gets into colour and details



Sleeping Beauty: Charlie was so inspired by Disney and fairy tales growing up and wanted to take inspirations from both the film and folklore to paint her own interpretation of it in this piece

the evenings and weekends... And then I somehow manage to squeeze in some personal work here and there as well. It can be quite challenging to constantly keep up the creativity and momentum, but I've found having a strong separation between what I do at work and what I do at home really helps with that.

WHAT IS A DAY IN THE LIFE LIKE FOR A CONCEPT ARTIST? DO YOU STICK TO A DAILY ROUTINE?

I'm a creature of habit and I definitely stick to a routine. In an average day at Atomhawk the majority of my time is taken up by painting. I sometimes stick to one piece of work throughout the day or it may be smaller chunks of work depending on what projects we're working on. A big part of my role as a Principal Artist is leading projects as well, so I take time throughout the day to check in with the artists on my team to make sure that they're happy with their work, provide feedback and make sure things are flowing smoothly.

WHERE DO YOU FIND INSPIRATION WHEN YOU ARE CREATING NEW CHARACTERS?

I find that most of my inspiration comes from a mixture of movies, books, art and life in general, I also really love people watching. I have an awfully long list of characters that I want to paint and the list just keeps growing! I'll never get through it all!

CAN YOU SHARE SOME OF THE STEPS THAT YOU TOOK TO CREATE YOUR PIECE *FOOL'S GOLD*?

I don't see the techniques that I use as being particularly special; I think I have a fairly simple approach, which works for me. My process varies depending on whether I'm designing a character or painting a character in a scene, but I usually start with a rough silhouette and work from there, building up the design and then taking it through to a more rendered finish.

Fool's Gold was a piece I really enjoyed working on. I took my time and worked on it over a couple of weeks. I was very inspired by Brad Kunkle and Yoann Lossel. I knew I wanted to use black, white and gold. I started with a rough sketch of the central character and the golden disc, and gradually sketched in the surroundings. I layered up a few gold foil textures to get the flaky look on the golden sections and rendered up the image until it was polished.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE WORKING ON THE CONCEPT ART FOR *INJUSTICE: GODS AMONG US*?

It was a lot of fun to work on. It's not every day you get to work on an IP that has such well established and long loved characters, the big comic book characters were a bit of a first for me. I found it really, really challenging at the time. I think it was the first game that I was involved in that I produced a large amount of work for. It was quite daunting to think we were working with huge companies like Warner Brothers,



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but it was really, really rewarding to see the final artwork animated in the game.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE AN ASPIRING CHARACTER DESIGNER?

My advice would be to aim for progress and not perfection. If you want to paint characters, then paint a lot of characters! I'd also say cast a wide net of inspiration, both in terms of references for designs and also the work of other artists. Don't get too fixated on one particular style. I spent a long time getting frustrated with trying to find a style when I started out, rather than just focusing on being a better artist.

WHAT TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES HAVE HELPED YOU AS AN ARTIST? ARE THERE SPECIAL TOOLS THAT YOU UTILISE?

I've used the same tools since I started out really. I think if you invest in decent equipment then it will last you a long time. I've always used Photoshop as it's the program I first started out with and after ten years it's where I feel most comfortable.

I've also always stuck with Wacom Intuos tablets. Admittedly, I have had to buy a couple of replacements thanks to spillages and puppy chewing, but I couldn't ever be without a tablet nowadays.

HOW DO YOU FIND CLIENTS AND DOES SOCIAL MEDIA PLAY A BIG ROLE IN YOUR WORK?

Social media plays a huge role in my work in regards to promoting it and connecting with new people to work

“My process varies depending on whether I'm designing a character or painting a character in a scene, but I usually start with a rough silhouette and work from there, building up the design”

with. I also just really enjoy connecting with artists and sharing work that I like. I have a slight Twitter addiction!

Most clients tend to find me through one online avenue or another. My day job provides a certain stability, meaning I can have a steady trickle of freelance work coming in without me having to chase the work down.

DO YOU HAVE ANY GOALS FOR THE FUTURE? IS THERE ANY SPECIFIC CLIENTS OUT THERE THAT YOU DREAM ABOUT WORKING FOR?

My biggest dream when I started out was to see my name in credits and have my work on the covers of books and magazines. Amazingly enough it's happened quite a few times now! And book covers have become one of my favourite things to work on.

More so than working for another client, I think I'd love to create a larger body of work for myself, whether it's an art book or an IP, I haven't decided yet.

ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON ANY NEW PROJECTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH US?

I'm working on plenty of projects, but unfortunately I can't share any of them!

I can say that I have some more book covers and magazine work coming out soon.

MASTER YOUR WORKFLOW

CHARLIE BOWATER SHARES HER ADVICE

■ LET LOOSE

I'm a detail driven individual a lot of the time when it comes to art and sometimes it's to my detriment. I find it really liberating to paint something now and then, which is really loose and suggestive. It's refreshing to just forget about those details and paint what you feel.

■ TAKE BREAKS

Remember to take breaks! Not just quick breaks whilst you're working, but a longer one once you think you've finished a painting. Come back to a painting the next day and you'll be looking through entirely new eyes, it probably won't be as finished as you thought it was.

■ CLIPPING MASKS

I've only started using clipping masks over the past year or so, but they are such a time saver. If you're working on a character for instance (separate from the background) paint anything over them on a clipping mask and it will stay within the constraints of the character. Right-click>Create Clipping Mask.

■ TEXTURE

I really like adding texture to my paintings in the final stages. My work tends to be very smooth and I like to add some kind of grungy texture to give it a bit of grit. I like gritty and papery textures, which are set to Overlay or Multiply, with the Opacity around 10-25%.

■ OVERLAY GLOW

I get a lot of use out of overlay when it comes to lighting. If you want pops of light or glowing areas, use a mixture of opaque layers and a big fuzzy brush set to Overlay on top, it will give you a nice buildable glow.



Ours: Mastering facial features is really important when designing characters. It is an ongoing learning process, and your characters will evolve more and more over time. Even professional character designers still refine their skill as time passes



Submerge: This is a wonderful example of how Charlie utilises textures in her digital painting. The flow of her brush strokes allow the viewer to imagine the character portrayed being lost underwater

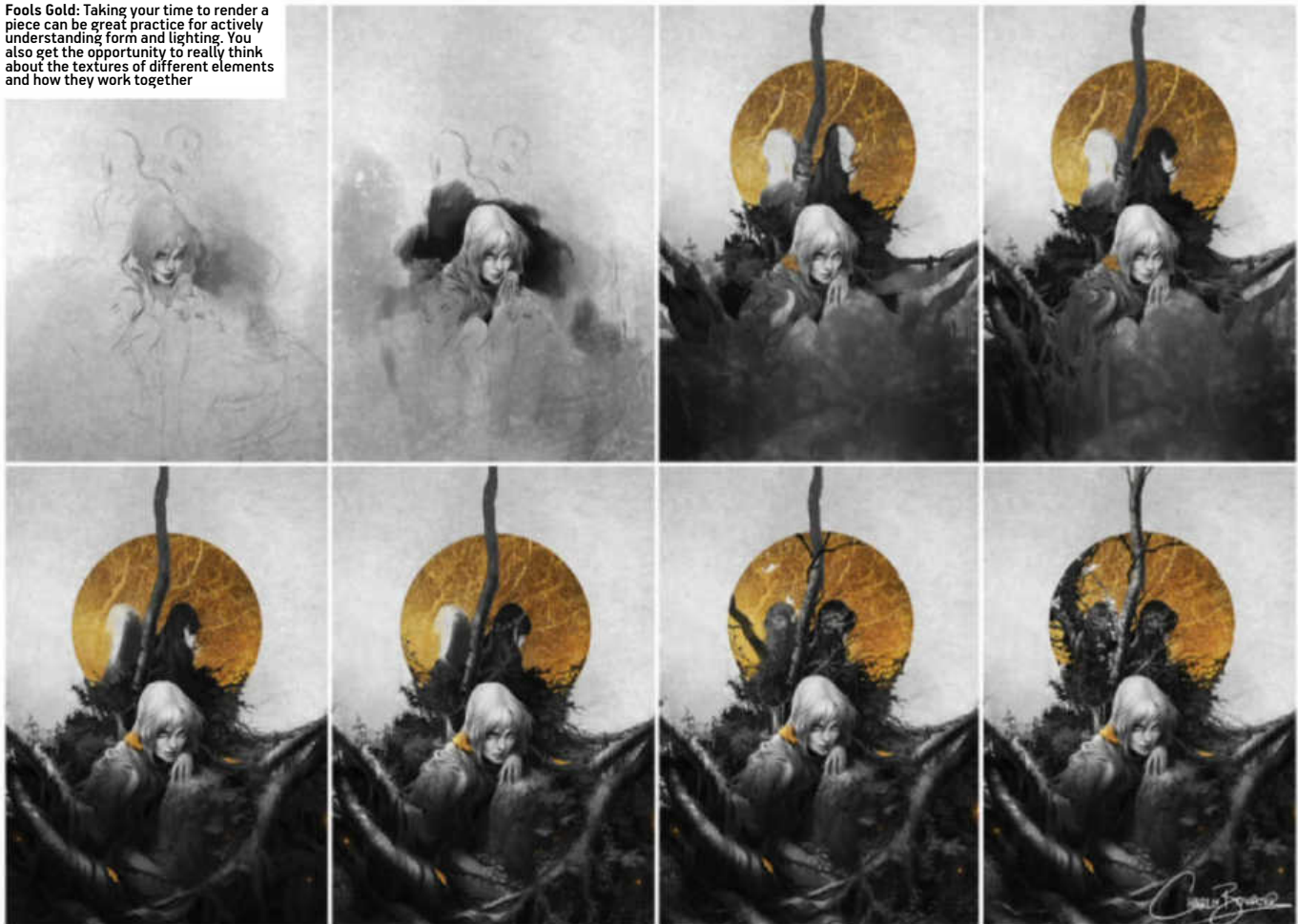


Sky Full of Stars:
Composition is very important when designing characters. The composition and stance of a character will sell the idea to the viewer and make them see what you want.



Declan

Fools Gold: Taking your time to render a piece can be great practice for actively understanding form and lighting. You also get the opportunity to really think about the textures of different elements and how they work together.



SMOKIN' TYPOGRAPHY

3D ILLUSTRATOR AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER ZIGOR SAMANIEGO REVEALS HOW HE CREATES DISTINCTIVE TYPOGRAPHY USING PHOTOSHOP AND CINEMA 4D

ABOUT THE ARTIST ZIGOR SAMANIEGO zigorsamaniego.net



After a background in computer graphics, 3D, and virtual reality, Zigor Samaniego is currently an artist at games company Ludei. He also regularly works for advertising agencies around the world such as Ogilvy and Demension

NAME OF PROJECT RUN RUN RUN!

Zigor Samaniego started out studying IT at university, but quickly realised that he much preferred designing graphics on computers. Making the decision to quit university after discovering his passion, Samaniego completed a short course on computer graphics and worked as a video post-production assistant for free before being hired by a virtual reality company where he spent four years creating 3D designs for public real estate and construction companies. "It wasn't the most fun job in the world," he reveals, "but I learned just about everything about 3D and lighting scenes."

Samaniego's persistence paid off. Today, he has free rein to do creative work at a video games company, as well as working for advertising agencies around the world.

For his latest personal typography based project *Run Run Run!* he was inspired by a time before all the success, when as a child, his father travelled in an old, polluting car.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST START USING PHOTOSHOP AS AN ARTIST?

I started using Photoshop just to add touches to the renderings I did for the local real estate companies and to resize images before I sent them to clients. I soon realised everything I could do with Photoshop and all of the features and improvements I could add to 3D images and now it is more important to me than the actual rendering program I use.

WHERE DID YOU GET INSPIRATION FROM FOR RUN RUN RUN!?

The work was inspired completely by an old car that my dad had that we used to travel in when I was a kid. I always remember that car as polluting a lot and that's why the letters are done in smoke.

HOW DID YOU DEVELOP THE CONCEPT?

I always start with a rough sketch in pencil done on paper, and, since I don't have a scanner, I take a picture with my phone and put it on a Cinema 4D background to geometrically model the image.

The smoke in *Run Run Run!* is made using an old CG technique that involves cloning small planes that have a transparent texture so that it looks more realistic. I also used a smoke paintbrush on Photoshop to touch it up a bit.

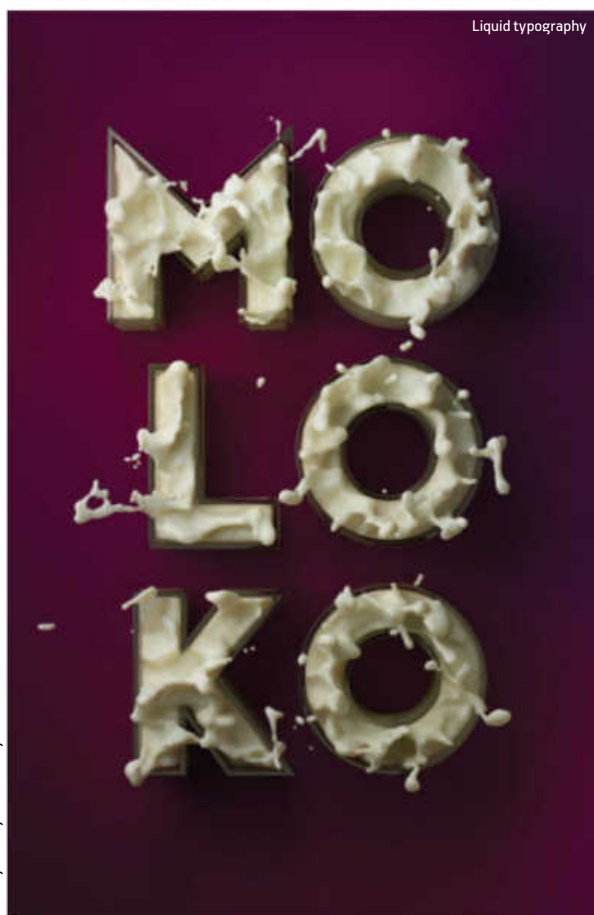
HOW DID YOU APPROACH USING BOTH PHOTOSHOP AND CINEMA 4D?

I always consider that the image I get with Cinema 4D is the raw ingredient that I have to slowly cook with Photoshop to get the desired final result. I do about 60 per cent of my work with Photoshop and I can spend hours at the end putting the final touches on a final render.

WHAT'S YOUR TYPICAL WORKFLOW?

The first thing is to have a story you want to tell or an idea to transmit. When I know what I want to do I start by making rough sketches in a notebook, which helps me define the composition and decide how many objects I need to model.

After this, I start working directly in Cinema 4D while looking for references online to find the correct proportions, [and] materials... When I have everything modelled and textured, I start with the lighting, which is one of the most important things in 3D as poor lighting can ruin



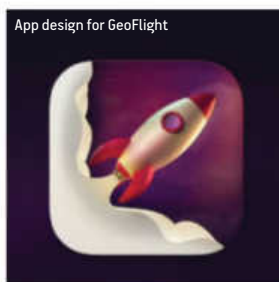
All images © Zigor Samaniego



App icon for the Fargo original series



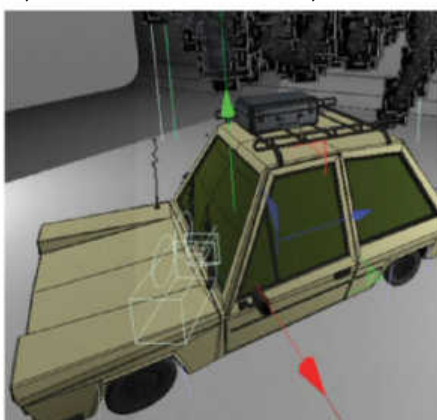
App design for Pixfera



App design for GeoFlight



"I add little details with artistic Photoshop paintbrushes to give it the smooth look of a traditional drawing"



"I used Photoshop to add extra smoke here that wasn't in the original rendering"



"I like to use Photoshop to add photographic effects to the renderings, for example, this glow in the bright areas"

a good scene. This testing phase normally takes me a long time, but it is worth it and it is one of my favourite parts of the process.

When it's time to do the rendering, I like to use many separate layers, the shading in one layer, the reflections in another, and so on, as this gives me the ability to play a lot with the final result.

Then, I open everything in Photoshop and I spend hours touching up the images and adding improvements. I like to use adjustment layers with masks and special brushes to add things like smoke or particles to the image, for example. I also erase any small imperfections that the 3D may have.



WHAT WERE THE MAIN CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES YOU FACED DURING THE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT?

I look for a small challenge in every project, something I don't know how to do, and, in this project it was the smoke.

On a previous project I had used the liquid simulator. In the design world, if you stop learning, you get left behind.

DO YOU CONSIDER THE *RUN RUN RUN!* PROJECT A SUCCESS?

Thanks to this project, various ad agencies have

gotten in touch with me to do several similar projects. So, I am very happy about that. If I had it to do over again, I would do it much faster.

I do personal projects in my free time and it can take me weeks to finish each one.

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT WHERE YOU AIM TO BE IN THE FUTURE?

I would like to continue working as I do now. The design world is tough and I am happy to be doing what I do, but I would like to have more time for personal projects, which are the ones I enjoy the most.



POKEDSTUDIO

WE CHAT TO THE TEAM AT POKEDSTUDIO ABOUT ITS QUIRKY CHARACTERS, MESMERISING WORLDS AND HIGH-PROFILE CLIENTS

Vibrant colours and quirky characters are all in a day's work for pokedstudio, whose illustrations stand out a mile from their peers and who aren't afraid to have fun with their designs. The international illustration, design and animation studio, based in Cardiff, was founded by illustrator Jonathan Ball who already had a solid reputation for his character designs and the intricate worlds he created.

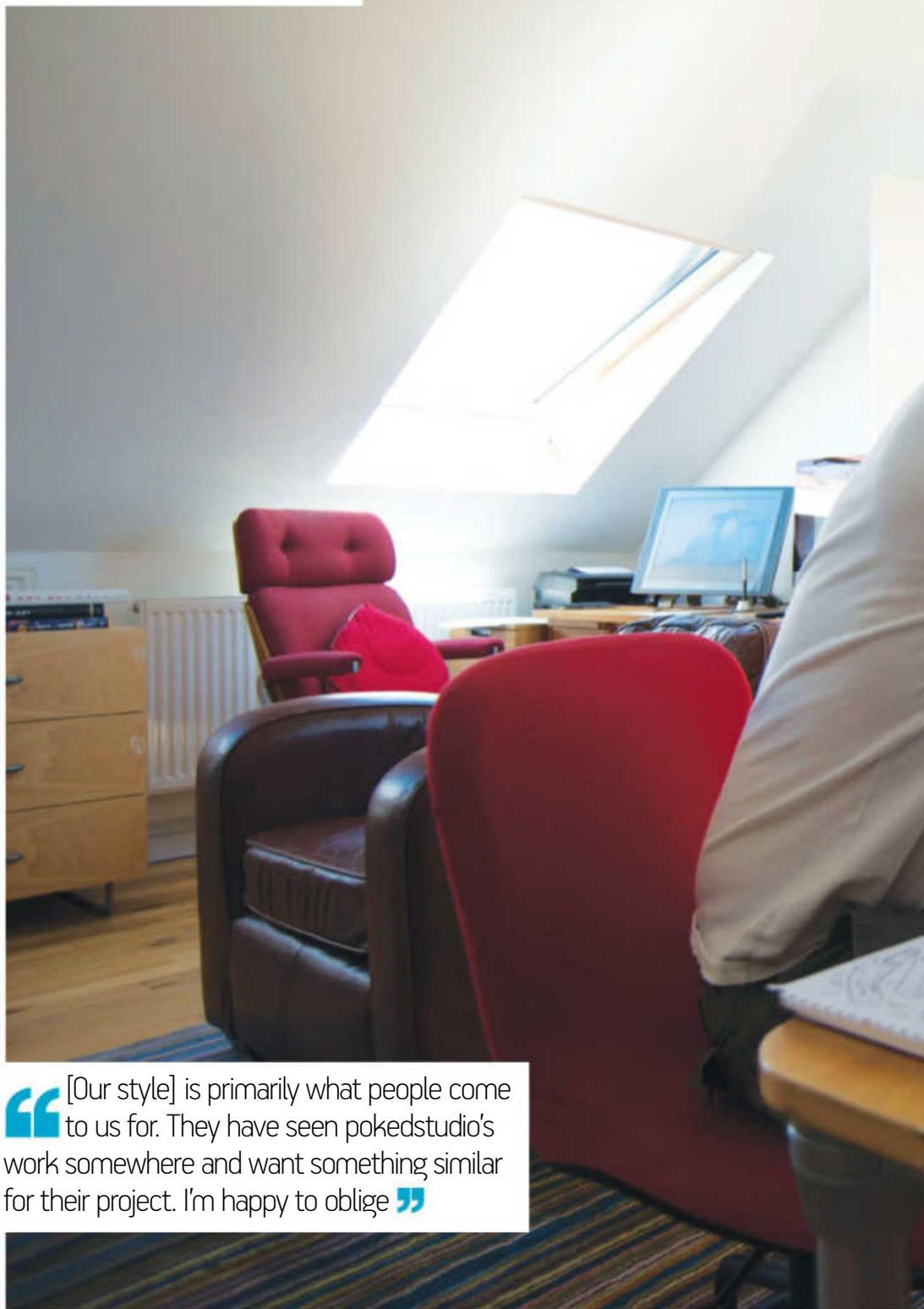
"Specialising in quirky characters and wacky worlds, we have created illustrations, graphics and designs for mobile apps, videogames, print campaigns, packaging, books, magazines and merchandise for many of the world's biggest youth-focused brands," is the studio's description of itself.

It's not surprising, then, that a whole host of well-known brands have wanted to work with pokedstudio and have a slice of this colourful, occasionally eccentric, world to help promote their products. Clients have so far included MTV, BBC, FHM, Sony, Microsoft, Fight My Monster, Britvic, the National Library of Wales, Digit, Argos, Channel 4, AVG, O2 Mobile, E4 and a plethora of magazines.

These clients are attracted to pokedstudio specifically for its style, says Jonathan Ball: "[Our style] is primarily what people come to us for. They have seen pokedstudio's work somewhere and want something similar for their project. I'm happy to oblige."

Having such a distinct look and focus is what sets this studio apart from its peers – it knows what it can do and it can do it very well indeed, though they are still incredibly flexible. "We have a unique style and take on design. It means we can sell ourselves as a brand. You can go to pokedstudio when you need a certain look. But we are also open to many other types of projects and have done work for banks and very business-orientated companies. We would like to think we are friendly and flexible too."

The style has evolved over the years, which can be clearly seen through Ball's many social media presences (find him on Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and more). Browsing through his Photostream on Flickr (www.flickr.com/photos/pokedstudio/), for example, you can visually see the change in style from his personal beginnings in retro, grunge effects mixed with street art, through to highly polished 3D renders that his studio is now famed for. What has remained the same, however, is the love for quirky characters and intense colours,



“[Our style] is primarily what people come to us for. They have seen pokedstudio's work somewhere and want something similar for their project. I'm happy to oblige”

pokedstudio



ABOUT THE STUDIO

POKEDSTUDIO

www.pokedstudio.com

@pokestuff

pokedstudio is an illustration, design and animation studio based in Cardiff, UK. It was founded by illustrator Jonathan Ball, who has built a reputation for wacky and non-conformist character designs, intricate worlds and edgy video graphics.



Jonathan Ball
Owner and
principal designer



Chris McFaul
Video editor



Stephen Thomas
Motion designer



All images © pokedstudio

Teamwork: The team hard
at work on a project

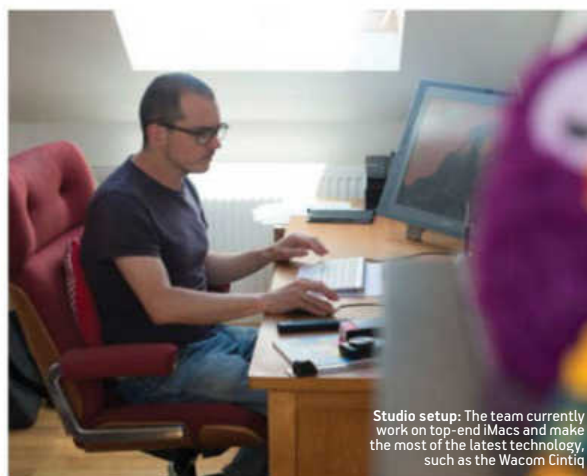


The design team: The design team working together in their creative space

Atomic Train: From a series on future cities, showing various visions of the future. All created in 3D



Main office: "The upstairs office is in a large attic space with enough space for three to four people to work"



Studio setup: The team currently work on top-end iMacs and make the most of the latest technology, such as the Wacom Cintiq

which is what makes pokedstudio's work just so visually appealing.

The studio was set up somewhere around 2004, when Ball was studying at college for a Graphic Design degree. He set up a website with some illustration work that he had created and started to receive a few commissions off the back of it. When he graduated, he briefly went to work for a corporate presentations company, but he continued to build up work for pokedstudio the whole time. In 2008, he reached the point where he could take on the studio full time.

"Most of the first work was for illustrations, but I soon started picking up other more complex projects, such as games and animations," explains Ball. "I started getting freelancers to help with the various projects, such as coding and rigging characters for animation. One of the first big projects

was building a Flash-based game for the National Library of Wales. I found a local programmer and we both worked on it all summer."

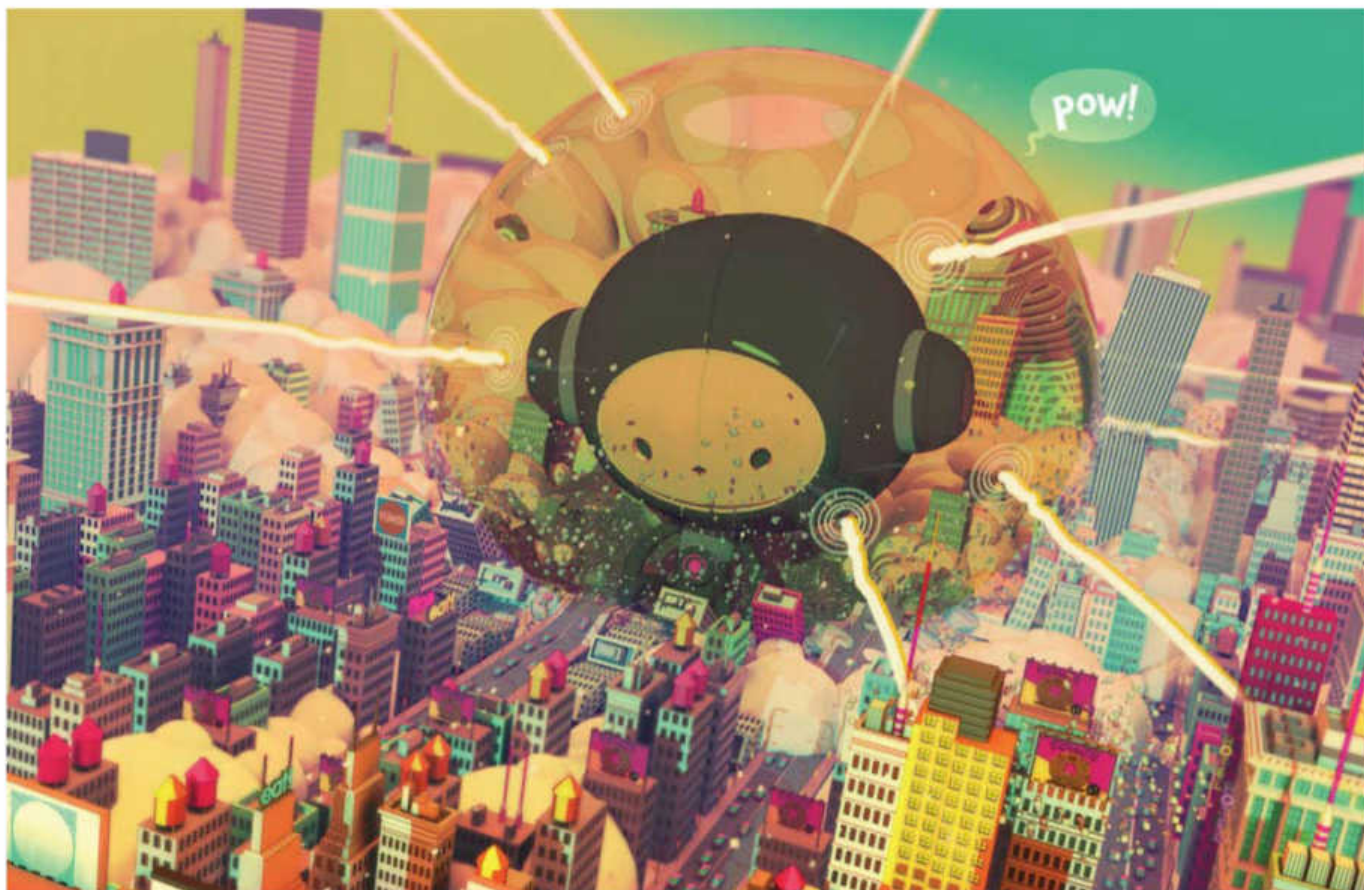
From here, Ball worked on a large online game and had to work with various designers and programmers in a number of different fields in order to bring the game and the various promotional pieces together. The project took over a year to complete. "These projects and others helped build experience at managing larger projects and teams of people from various skillsets," says Ball.

Nowadays, Ball works in his studio alongside a number of regular freelancers, including video editor Chris McFaul and motion designer Stephen Thomas. pokedstudio often engages in projects that need a number of team members to complete and Ball has built up a network that helps him to achieve this: "There are a number of local design businesses I can

call upon for many larger projects, as well people further away, from games developers and animators to film crew. They will sometimes work from my offices or at their own location. Skype is used a lot to communicate and keep up to date. We network quite a lot locally and are building up some great contacts."

Ball's own studio space consists of two main offices. The upstairs one is a large attic space, which can easily fit three to four people in to work: "It has lots of light, which is great, but gets hot in the summer. We have a great sound system and a few games machines to help get us in the mood." There is also a smaller office below, which is used for accounts and admin tasks.

The studio has four top-end iMacs set up, but as a small studio, the right hardware can come with its own problems, says Ball: "Choosing to upgrade our hardware has proven tricky, as there are so



■ ATOMIC BOY

THIS IMAGE COMES FROM A SHORT ANIMATION CREATED FOR AN ANIMATION FESTIVAL



01 INITIAL SKETCH

This is the initial sketch used to set the scene of the animation. It depicts a giant city being destroyed by a robot boy. Inspired by iconic 1980s Japanese animation *Akira*, it was to be a 3D animation, but with a 'toon look.



02 PHOTOSHOP ILLUSTRATION

I created an illustration to work out and experiment with the visual style I wanted in the animation. I was after a slightly 'toonish look. To get the effect, we took our 3D render into Photoshop and used some style effects such as Find Edges, and used layer blending to achieve the look.



03 TEST RENDER

Time to create our test animations. This was a bit of an experimental animation, so we had a lot of fun trying out different views and angles. I realised I would need a lot of buildings to create a large city.



04 COMP RENDER

We edit a sequence of animations to make our story. Although we had a storyboard, I wanted to be flexible here. Not all the test animations were used; we played around a lot here and experimented with some extra effects.



05 FINAL RENDERS

We now make final renders of all our sequences, which takes a week or so. We then comp them all together in After Effects and use the same settings as Photoshop to achieve the desired look. Music and sound effects are also mixed in.

many variables it's difficult to know what to go for. Graphics cards are being used more and more for intensive computing tasks, but the new Mac Pros are AMD only, which is very limiting." These powerful machines are essential to run the 3D software that is important in getting the distinct pokedstudio look. Blender and Cinema 4D are the go-to programs for this, though After Effects, Illustrator and Affinity Designer are in use almost constantly. The team is always looking to expand their skills and are developing their skills in ZBrush and exploring various side-ware and visual effects packages.

Even though there is a very 3D feel to the work that pokedstudio creates, Photoshop is a very key tool in the production workflow of the studio. "Photoshop is a lynchpin for the work that we do," says Stephen Thomas. "From storyboarding and sketching ideas and concepts, to creating the final artwork. We work with a whole toolbox of applications: Blender, Premiere, After Effects, Nuke... The list goes on. Photoshop fits very well into our pipeline."

Because the studio works with such high-profile clients, many of its projects come with non-disclosure agreements and they can't talk about a lot of what they are working on. Ball reflects on a recent project that was particularly memorable: "One recent project I enjoyed was developing a set of odd-ball characters for a local entrepreneur. I really enjoyed

“Photoshop is a lynchpin for the work that we do. From storyboarding and sketching ideas and concepts, to creating the final artwork”



Heads: "Mutant toys, rendered in 3D. A mix of well-known characters and some of my own"

that, as it gave me a chance to use and learn 3D sculpting techniques." This is typical of pokedstudio's ethos – they are not afraid to take up the challenge and accept projects that can be time-consuming or come with difficulties. "Lots of projects are challenging in different ways," says Chris Mcfaul. "Sometimes it's a tight deadline; sometimes the client can't make up their mind and you go through hundreds of amends. We recently had to make an animation for a five-minute music video in around two weeks. Jon and I worked night and day to get it done, but we got there in the end."

Commercial work takes up a lot of time for the studio, but it is important to Ball that he works on his

own personal projects, which he sells as a range of prints and art products (see www.pokedstudio.com/shop for details): "These help promote pokedstudio and to build new skills in various software and learn new approaches to workflow."

Personal work is definitely on the cards going forward too, as well as expanding into different areas for commercial endeavours. "We are getting bigger so we will need to take on more people to work on larger animation projects," says Ball. "I am hoping we can push the animation side of the business forward in the next few years. Also, I am personally working on my own character properties that I hope to license out or turn into games and products."

■ A DAY IN THE LIFE OF JONATHAN BALL

JONATHAN LEADS US THROUGH A TYPICAL DAY, COMBINING CLIENT AND PERSONAL PROJECTS



09:00 GET STARTED

Have a large coffee and pick up the projects I need to work on today. Typically there will be more than one, so I will be spending a few hours on each. If someone else is in, I will go over the day's work, or Skype them if they are working remotely.



10:00 COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

More coffee. Working on today's main projects. Often creating some animations or an illustration. I mostly work on the commercial projects in the morning.



14:00 SOME ADMIN

I often do any accounting work, sending and chasing invoices, and working out tax and wages, etc, just after lunch. I find I'm at my least creative after [I] have just eaten so it's best to do more menial tasks then.

“ [Personal projects] help promote pokedstudio and to build new skills in various software and learn new approaches to workflow ”

Garden: A rare image showing a departure from colour, though maintaining the usual quirkiness that the studio is known for



TOP 5 PRODUCTION TIPS

■ UNDERSTAND THE BRIEF

Get all the information that you can from the client first, before starting on any work. Clarify deadlines and size requirements from the outset.

■ CONCEPTS

Get going on the concepts once you have clarified the brief, but only share the best with your clients, or the ones that you think are achievable.

■ KNOW YOUR TEAM

Get to know your own skills and the skills of the team you are working with, so that you can assign the best people to the right jobs.

■ CHECK YOUR SOFTWARE

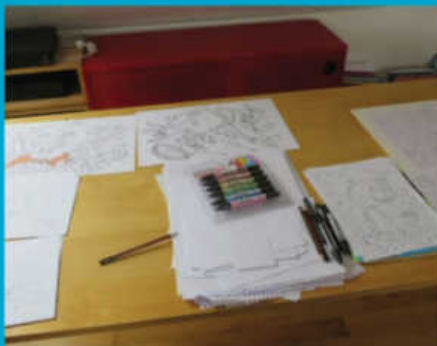
Make sure your software is up to date, and you have any plug-ins or side-ware installed before you start; don't find out halfway through that everything is incompatible.

■ STAY EDITABLE

Make sure you have easily editable versions ready at the end of the project in case you need to go back and redo anything.



Avatars: From the Fight My Monster online game (www.fightmymonster.com), created by Dominic Williams. pokedstudio has created nearly all the artwork, illustrations, characters, adverts, animations and merchandise



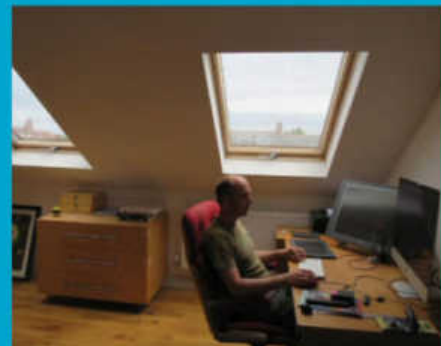
15:00 | PERSONAL PROJECTS

If I have time, I have a look at some personal and promo projects. I always have a few on the go and they are largely what brings in the new work and stimulates interest in the company.



17:00 | TOMORROW'S PREP

Review the day's work, make final adjustments and prepare for tomorrow. I also make sure I have sent and read all the emails I need to.



19:00 | INTERNATIONAL CALLS

Due to having international clients, sometimes I have to do evening conference calls. I try to make sure they are not too late, though I have been called a few times at one in the morning!

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AHMADTURKI182.WIX.COM/AHMADTURKI



A self-taught 3D artist with six years' experience in the industry, Ahmad Turki has won five excellence awards from 3D

Total and has been featured in *3D World* magazine, *3D Artist* magazine, *3D Creative* magazine and *INCC Showcase* magazine.

FAHRAN YOUNAS
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Fahrhan Younas is lead artist at Arquí9, a high-end studio specialising in architectural visualisation

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Khaled Alkayed is a Jordanian artist working as a 3D artist at Team Y&R, where he's developed his 3D skills in the advertising industry.

KEY POST-PRODUCTION TOOLS

THE ESSENTIAL PHOTOSHOP TOOLS YOU NEED TO MASTER

1. SPOT HEALING BRUSH

Remove blemishes while matching the colour, lighting, shading and transparency of the surrounding pixels – perfect for detailed areas of the face and hair.

2. PATCH TOOL

Repair an area with pixels sampled from another area of the image, or a pattern. In Photoshop CC it has Content-Aware functionality for added accuracy.

3. DODGE AND BURN

Enhance shadows and highlights. Use on a 50% Gray layer set to Overlay for a more subtle result, as Dodge and Burn can introduce odd colour artefacts sometimes.

4. RENDER PASSES

Created when rendering in 3D, these different ways that the render engine represents your image can be used to make masks and selections, or duplicated to use as adjustments.

5. ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Enhance and change colour, tone and the overall feel of the image, from simple Hue/Saturation adjustments to Color Lookup, which replicates the look of particular kinds of lighting or camera film.

6. CLONE STAMP TOOL

Clone out blemishes by sampling and overlaying nearby pixels. Good for retouching large areas of similarly coloured skin, like the cheeks.

7. FILTERS

Process the entire image, to sharpen, blur or add noise that replicates the look of a photograph. More creative filters are available, but are seldom used in post-production.

8. BLEND MODES

Change the appearance of layers, introduce colour shifts and transparency, and add light and shadow. Blend modes are particularly useful when used in tandem with render passes and adjustment layers.

9. LAYER MASKS

Add and erase image elements non-destructively. Pixels on a layer mask can be painted (or selected) in and out of your composition, but unlike erasing, the data is not lost.

10. SELECTIONS

Select an area of the image to make changes and adjustments to. There are lots of different ways to select image areas in Photoshop; in post-production Color Range and the Pen tool are powerful, popular tools.

Post-production represents a huge chunk of the Photoshop industry. For every illustrator or digital painter working in the field, there are many more Photoshop experts whose job is to use their skills to enhance photos, make 3D artwork look realistic and bring their professional techniques to advertising and other commercial projects. For many Photoshop artists, post-production is their day job, and its rigorous discipline fuels the technical skills that allow them to create such high-quality images in both their professional and personal work.

You can learn a lot from a post-production workflow, whether it's for photos, 3D graphics, or a mix of the two. After the basic skeleton of the artwork is produced – the studio photo, or 3D render – it's the post-production artist's job to add the icing to the cake, performing the edits and enhancements that will really make the image shine. Most post-production artists have a clear process that they follow for doing this. It may seem that post-production is strict, and indeed it is sometimes, with its adherence to particular tools and techniques, like dodging and burning, adjustment layers, or working with render passes. But within those defined parameters – which post-production artists have created in order to streamline their workflow and improve their images – you can also find a lot of creative freedom. Master the post-production workflow, and you'll discover the tools and techniques you need to take your Photoshop work to the next level.





OUR EXPERT

RICARDO THOMAZ

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Ricardo Thomaz is a retouching artist from Brazil. He specialises in portrait work and advertising images and works as a finaliser, finishing images to a high degree using his specialised post-production techniques in Photoshop.

■ RETOUCH PRO TIP

Create a new layer, name it Skin, select the Mixer Brush and set it to Wet 10%, Load 10%, Mix 20% and Flow 20 %, with Sample All Layers selected. Now smooth it over the transitions in the model's skin tone.

ESSENTIAL RETOUCHING TOOLS

KEY PHOTOSHOP TOOLS FOR PORTRAIT POST-PRODUCTION

Tools like the Spot Healing brush, Clone Stamp tool and Patch tool are fundamental for retouching and removing noise and dirt. Use these tools when cleaning up the image, before applying other adjustments. Even if you're working with a JPEG rather than a RAW file, the Camera Raw Filter is a very welcome addition to Photoshop's post-production workflow. You can make adjustments using this filter, creating multiple layers of separate settings; the result will

be completely editable. Refine Edge is a fantastic solution for cutting out hair. There are several ways to cut out hair, but this tool is the most effective and can be really useful when you want to fine-tune a mask.

Use and abuse filters, they are there to help out, to facilitate all your work. Make several tests with them, play with all of the filters and you will learn a lot of things that you can do with them.

RETOUCH LIKE A PRO

MASTER THE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES YOU NEED IN A PORTRAIT-BASED POST-PRODUCTION WORKFLOW

Even with a full studio setup portraits will still often need post-production. Retouching techniques can be used to even out skin tone and correct minor imperfections, smooth down hair and enhance eyes. Camera Raw makes a great starting point as it gives you full tonal control over

the image. The Brush and Mixer brush tools as well as the Spot Healing brush, Clone Stamp and Patch tool are all used to clean up imperfections, and each has its own advantages. Dodging and burning is a classic technique first used in traditional darkrooms, and it still forms

a key part of the portrait post-production process in Photoshop today. Finally, Color Lookup filters and adjustment layers allow for precise colour control. The image used here is available to purchase from www.shutterstock.com (135988079), as is the background design (157853540).



01 CREATE THE BACKGROUND

Create a linear gradient of colour R245, G217, B172 to colour R197, G159, B107 in Normal mode at 100% Opacity. Then create a new layer and fill it with color R154, G123, B85 in Multiply mode at 20% Opacity. Now open the image of the stars with black background (Shutterstock 157853540), put it in Screen mode and position the image in the form of an S. The radial gradient will be behind the model, so make a selection with the Lasso tool, not too close to the edge, and create a Curves adjustment layer with Input set to 60 and Output set to 30. The edges will be harsh and lighter in the centre.



04 DODGE, BURN, AND CUT OUT THE MODEL

To Dodge and Burn, create a new layer set to 50% Gray in Overlay mode and call it 'Retouch'. With the Brush tool, and using either default black or default white, both at 7% Opacity, highlight the lightest areas using white and darken the darkest parts with black. To cut out the model, create a path skirting the model, including the hair, using the Pen tool. Select>Refine Edge is a very effective tool for such job. Make the selection of the model using the path and with the Retouch layer selected, click on Select>Refine Edge at the top. Under Edge Detection, tick Smart Radius and choose 5px. Under Adjust Edge set Smooth to 5, Feather 0.0, Contrast 0 and Shift Edge to 0. Under Output set Output to New Layer With Layer Mask.



02 RETOUCH AND SOFTEN SKIN

Remove any dark or strange spots on the skin with the Spot Healing brush (J); you can also use the Clone Stamp tool (S). Go to Filter>Camera Raw Filter and set as follows: in the Basic tab: Temperature +5, Tint 0, Exposure +0.10, Contrast -8, Highlights -21, Shadows -11, Whites -1, Blacks +14, Clarity -20, Vibrance 20, Saturation -30. In the Tone Curve tab set Highlights to +5, Lights 0, Darks +5 and Shadows to 10. On the Detail tab set Sharpening to: Amount 30, Radius 1.0, Detail 10 and Masking 0. On the HSL/Grayscale tab set the Hue as follows: Reds +10, Oranges +5, and the other colours to 0. Under Saturation set Reds +10, Oranges +5 and the other colours to 0. Under Luminance set Reds to 15, Oranges to -10 and all other colours to 0.



03 RETOUCH EYES, LIPS AND EYELASHES

Create a new layer, name it Eyes. On this layer you will give a highlight to the eyes, making them more alive. Using the Brush tool, select the eye colour itself, a brown tone, set the layer to Soft Light and go around the iris. For the lips, create a new layer called Lips and do the same, choosing a pink tone from the mouth of the model set to Soft Light at 40% Opacity. For eyelashes, take the Brush tool and make it 20% black at a size of 2px and set to Multiply. Create more eyelashes and a few hairs on the eyebrows, and lightly go around the rims of the eyes as if applying eyeliner – this will give the eyes more prominence.



05 FILTERS, HIGH PASS AND NOISE

Create a Color Balance adjustment layer at 80% Opacity and set as follows: Shadows: Cyan-Red -2, Magenta-Green -3, Yellow-Blue -10; Midtones: Cyan-Red -3, Magenta-Green -1, Yellow-Blue -5; and Highlights: Cyan-Red -18, Magenta-Green -3, Yellow-Blue -7. Create a Color Lookup adjustment layer and in Properties set the 3DLUT File to LateSunset.3DL at 20% Opacity. Create another Color Lookup adjustment with the 3DLUT File set to Crisp_Warm.look at 20% Opacity. To add contrast, create a Black & White

adjustment layer set to Soft Light with Opacity and Fill both set to 35%. Under Preset set it to High Contrast Red Filter with Default settings. Make a Vibrance adjustment layer and set it to Vibrance +80 and Saturation -20. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Opt/Alt+E to create a stamped duplicate of all layers, go to Filter>Other>High Pass, set Radius to 7 and click OK. Set this layer to Soft Light at 50% Opacity. Finally, create a new 50% Gray layer set to Soft Light, go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise, set Amount to 10%, Distribution to Uniform, and click OK.



3D POST-PRODUCTION WITH RENDER PASSES

DISCOVER HOW THE RENDER PASSES GENERATED WHEN YOU EXPORT 3D IMAGES CAN SPEED UP YOUR POST-PRODUCTION WORKFLOW

Here you will learn how to do some quick compositing with your render passes using Photoshop. Photoshop is a great program for post-production, it gives you free control over your image, it's got lots of tools that can be used to enhance your work, and it ties your designs together with colour adjustments, letting you control the vibrancy of your elements, and adjust your levels paving the way to balanced lighting. Gradients can boost colour and merge all the elements together.

In this tutorial you will learn how to arrange Colour, Ambient Occlusion, and Object ID render passes, edit them and combine them all together to produce a great result. We'll also show you some techniques for making your image sharp and crisp while still retaining all of the details, and how to use the gradient map as a colour theme using the layer blending modes. This tutorial starts with render passes created in Maya. You have to make sure to save your renders in PNG format; PNG files are not compressed and will not lose quality. Also, it saves the image with a transparent background.



01 | GATHER YOUR RENDER PASSES

We start by opening Photoshop and creating a new file (Cmd/Ctrl+N), then we grab all the render passes we did in Maya (Colour, Occlusion, Object ID) and then we start by arranging the layers. The background should be the first layer and then we add the Colour pass on top of it. Then we put the Occlusion and Object ID on top of that.



OUR EXPERT

AHMAD TURKI
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A self-taught 3D artist with six years' experience in the industry, Ahmad Turki has won five excellence awards from 3D Total and has been featured in 3D World magazine, 3D Artist magazine, 3D Creative magazine and INCG Showcase magazine.



02 MASK THE OBJECTS

After getting the layers ready, we move on to masking the Colour pass. We use the Object ID pass to isolate elements and then post process them if you need. Each render pass can act as a mask. By using the Magic Wand (W) you can select a colour or object on any of the passes and then copy (Cmd/Ctrl+C) the object you selected and paste it (Cmd/Ctrl+V) into a new layer to create a mask, or work with the outline of the selection to make adjustments. You can use Hue/Saturation, Brightness/Contrast or Auto Contrast from the Image>Adjustments menu to post-process details from each pass.



03 ADD MORE SHADOWS USING AMBIENT OCCLUSION

Now is the fun part! After finishing with masking and adjusting your Colour pass, we move on to the next level, which is to add the Ambient Occlusion layer above the Colour layer and change the layer mode from Normal to Multiply. Ambient Occlusion allows you to simulate the soft shadows that occur in the cracks and crevices of your 3D objects when indirect lighting is cast out onto your scene. The soft shadows that are created from ambient occlusion can help to define the separation between objects in your scene and add another level of realism to your render.



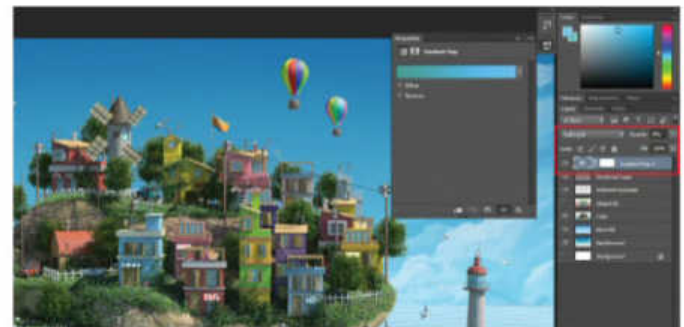
04 ADD THE BACKGROUND AND MATCH COLOURS

Selecting the background image starts off with knowing what to look for in a great background render. Sure you can choose any picture you want, but a carefully selected image is proven to give you far greater results. So, after selecting my background layer (the sea and sky) I have to make sure to match the colour. I tend to use Hue/Saturation as a start (Cmd/Ctrl+U), and for more colouring and matching, I can create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), fill it with blue colour and then play with the layer mode.



05 MAKE THE IMAGE CRISP

Now this is one of the best tricks if you're after a crisp look or you want more contrast in your image. What you do is, after finishing with all the layers you have (Background, Foreground and so on), combine all the layers by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Opt/Alt+E. This command will create a new layer with all the layers combined together. Set it to Overlay and go to Filter>Other>High Pass, playing with the levels until you get the effect you want.



06 GRADE COLOURS

After getting everything almost ready for your image, now we move on to grading and creating a general colour theme. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Gradient Map and you can select any two colours (You can adjust those colours later) and then change the layer mode to Soft Light. Of course if you feel the gradient is too much you can always reduce the opacity.



07 FINALISE THE IMAGE

Now we're almost there, you can always go back and re-use your Object ID layer to re-mask some of the objects in the image, in case they need tweaking. For this outdoor image you will be adding some glow by creating a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N) and selecting a

brush with Hardness set to 50%. Now you can start painting the glow. After finishing you will need to go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. A Radius of 25 pixels should be enough. Choose the Lighten layer mode for the glow layer, a white colour should be good for the glow.

RENDER PASSES AND HOW TO USE THEM

IMPROVE YOUR POST-PRODUCTION BY MAKING USE OF DIFFERENT RENDERS

Render passes, or render elements, are the raw elements generated by the rendering engine that are composited together for you into the final output render. Some of these elements are Lighting, Shadows, Reflections, Specular and Global Illumination just to mention a few. We can extract and customise these elements and put everything together ourselves in most post-production software that supports the compositing of layers. Going about it this way will give us much greater control over the look of the final result, as render passes can be used to select and mask colours and elements across multiple layers, allowing us to make granular adjustments.



OUR EXPERT
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Fahran Younas is lead artist at Arqui9, a high-end studio specialising in architectural visualisation.



DYNAMIC POST-PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES FOR 3D ARCH-VIS

LEARN HOW TO TAKE YOUR RENDER TO THE NEXT LEVEL IN PHOTOSHOP AND CREATE AN ATMOSPHERIC ARCH-VIS IMAGE

These tips and tricks can be used to add that bit of flair and spark to your new or existing renders. A lot of people today aim for achieving the perfect render straight out of their 3D software and working up every last element in 3D. As we all know this can sometimes be quite time consuming as well as rigid.

Adding details in afterwards in programs such as Photoshop can not only be quicker, but also more dynamic. As most artists, especially those new to this field always tend to strive for the best render possible, we thought it would be good to share how flexible and free it can be to explore what is possible in the post-production phase. Keeping yourself loose and flexible with your tools allows your creativity to take hold and push past the technical restraints. In this tutorial you will see a few tips and tricks that can help you add that spark to your images. If you want to see more, please head over to the Arqui9 YouTube page (www.youtube.com/channel/UCBzPV2uSji-Z5-x_svnZV1w) for more in-depth tricks.

GET MORE FROM BLEND MODES

THE KEY TO A FASTER WORKFLOW

Blending modes are an integral part of Photoshop and they are essential to us here at Arqui9. They enable us to experiment and overlay textures, layers and just about anything almost instantly. From screening over highlights to multiplying grunge textures, blend modes are integral to any visual artist using Photoshop. Here we've used them to apply reflections and rim lighting to add realism to the image. With blend modes your workflow will increase in speed and open up a door to pushing your creative limits.



01 | THE PASSES SERVE YOU

Having render elements at your disposal will allow you to take your render into another dimension. They can serve you beyond the typical scenario, for instance your Z-depth pass instead of being screened over can be used as a mask to brush in your own custom depth. As you can see here, we have used our Z-depth as a mask for our group, which will allow us to manually paint where we think the depth best serves the image. The layer has been set to the Screen blending mode and the depth painted with a large soft brush.

RETOUCH PRO TIP

Use a textured brush with Scattering switched on as this helps add interest by breaking up the surface. Increase the scatter count and overall percentage to give the brush some detail.



02 CUT OUT YOUR ASSETS

Once you have a suitable vegetation image, open it in Photoshop and go to the Channels tab. Select the Blue Channel and make a new channel, then using Curves you set your black and white points. Apply your mask, you will notice it may be a little jagged. Go to Layer>Matting>Defringe to fix this.



03 COMPOSE YOUR SHOT

As you can see, we have three dimensions to the visual, the foreground, mid and backgrounds. Each area goes hand in hand with and complements the others. Think about how the trees can help frame your view and bring the viewer in, or how a person can help bring your eye into the frame.



04 CORRECT YOUR ASSETS

Use a Levels adjustments layer and then correct the black point. Once the value is set, we move onto colour, using a Color Balance adjustment layer we are able to bring the Midtones to a cooler colour. Use the sliders and see what works best for you. To finish we used a Hue/Saturation layer to lower the saturation to knock the woman back into the view. Here there is a lamp post behind her so we make a new layer, set it to Soft Light and brush in a rim light for her.



05 WORK ON REFLECTIONS

One of the best ways to bring a sense of realism is through the use of reflection. Every material reflects in its own manner and sometimes you may need to break what your brain assumes to be correct. We have brushed in a reflection onto the road manually. The easiest way to do this is go to Image>Apply Image, right-click and choose Flip Vertical. Then we create a layer mask and selectively brush in where we want a reflection.



06 APPLY GRADING

Using a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer set to Soft Light can really help unite the various tones together. Then we either push the cool or warm tones using a Curves or Color Balance layer and tweaking the midtones. A helpful tip is to view your image in black and white, then use Levels to adjust the black and white points. One final element not to forget is the addition

of a vignette, which will help you achieve that photographic feel; this can be added by simply brushing in using a large soft airbrush, painting on a Soft Light layer or a Levels adjustment layer.



CREATIVE POST-PRODUCTION WITH LAYERS AND FILTERS

LEARN HOW TO COMPOSITE RENDER LAYERS USING BLENDING MODES AND FILTERS IN PHOTOSHOP

Layers, layer styles, blend modes and filters are all essential when it comes to post-production of any kind. They lend themselves particularly well to automotive images, which often combine 3D renders with photos, used either as a main part of the composition or as textures. The artwork here is based on a personal project that Khaled Alkayed worked on for six months and won some awards for. "The idea came when I was watching movies like Death Race and Mad Max. They gave me the urge to do something similar so I started with a Maybach Exelero then went onto this one, the Ferrari Enzo," explains Alkayed.

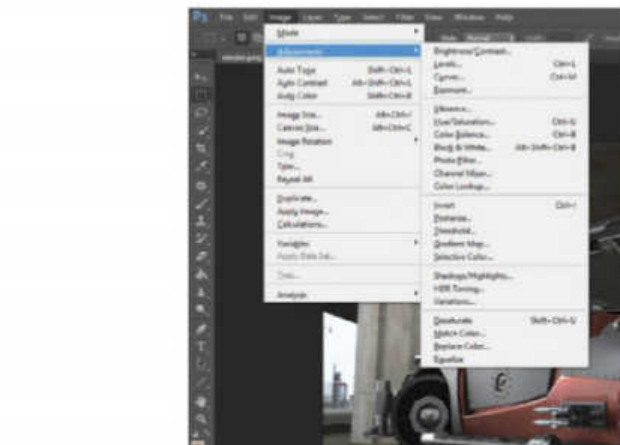
This tutorial will explain the process behind the artwork and will focus on the main steps taken in the post-production stage of the work using Photoshop. He used Maya for modelling the vehicle then rendered using V-Ray to export the final image with what we need from the render passes. With those in place for us to build masks and selections from, we'll build up effects on layers and use the Magic Bullet plug-in to enhance the image further. The aim is to make this look like a real photo, so we'll be re-creating lens effects and depth of field as part of the post-production process.



OUR EXPERT

KHALED ALKAYED
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Khaled Alkayed is a Jordanian artist working as a 3D artist at Team Y&R, where he's developed his 3D skills in the advertising industry.



The screenshot shows the Photoshop 'Image' menu with the 'Adjustments' submenu open. The 'Adjustments' submenu is highlighted in blue and lists the following options: Auto Tones (Shift+Ctrl+J), Auto Contrast (Alt+Shift+Ctrl+J), Auto Color (Shift+Ctrl+B), Image Size (Alt+Ctrl+I), Canvas Size (Alt+Shift+Ctrl+C), Image Rotation (Ctrl+T), Crop (Ctrl+Alt+C), Layer Mask (Ctrl+Alt+M), Gradient Map (Shift+Ctrl+G), Desaturate (Shift+Ctrl+U), Invert (Ctrl+I), Dither (Ctrl+Alt+D), Threshold (Ctrl+Shift+Alt+T), Gradient Map (Shift+Ctrl+G), Selective Color (Ctrl+Shift+F), Shading/Highlights (Ctrl+Shift+L), HSB Tuning (Ctrl+Shift+H), Variations (Ctrl+Shift+B), Desaturate (Shift+Ctrl+U), Spot Color (Shift+Ctrl+W), Previous Color (Shift+Ctrl+Z), and Equalize (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+U).

The screenshot shows the game's main menu on the left, with the 'Options' menu open. The 'Options' menu lists various settings categories: Display, Controls, Audio, Game, Network, and Advanced. The 'Display' category is currently selected, showing sub-options for Resolution, Frame Rate, and Graphics. The background of the menu is a high-quality render of a red AT-AT walker from Star Wars: The Force Awakens, positioned in a desert-like environment.



OUR EXPERT

MILTON MENEZES
www.lightfarmbrasil.com

Milton is a creative retoucher and director at Lightfarm Studios in Brazil. He is also a professor at Miami Ad School and primary speaker at Photoshop Conference, Pixel Show and Adobe MAX.

PRO POST-PRODUCTION

LIGHTFARM'S POST-PRODUCTION CREW ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO COLLABORATE WITH ONE OF THE BEST CGI TEAMS IN THE ADVERTISING INDUSTRY. HERE'S HOW THEY WORK WITH THEIR INCREDIBLY REALISTIC RENDERS

This image came out of Victor Maiorino's head," explains Milton Menezes. "He's the CG artist at Lightfarm Studios. My job was to use Photoshop to make the image pop, as well as fix reflection problems, white balance, colour correction, create extra droplets and add the overall warmer feel. This Photoshop work was supposed to look invisible, as the original render was pretty much half way there. We take renders just as raw shots and treat them the same way."

This approach to post-production – treating a 3D render as if it's a photograph in need of retouching – is what allows Lightfarm to achieve

the level of believability that characterises the team's work. Their approach means that even the most whimsical subject matter looks as if it really exists, which is an essential skill in producing believable advertising images.

Founded in New Zealand, but with a creative team (headed up by Milton Menezes) also based in Brazil, Lightfarm is a truly international studio, and as well as commissioned work for its high-profile clients, Lightfarm also produces personal projects to help the teams develop their skills. This image is one of those – let's take a look behind the scenes at Lightfarm to see how they produced it.



WORK IN PROGRESS

FROM THE RAW RENDER TO THE FINISHED IMAGE



Progress 1: Raw render



Progress 2: Camera Raw



Progress 3: Final image

PREPARE THE BASE

IMPORT THE RENDER PASSES AND CUT OUT THE PLANES



QUICK TIP: THE POWER OF CAMERA RAW

Before you start adjusting the layers in your file, you should try to get the most out of your Camera Raw Smart Filter. It's an incredibly powerful image editor, and because it's designed for photographs, it enhances the realism of post-production on a 3D render.

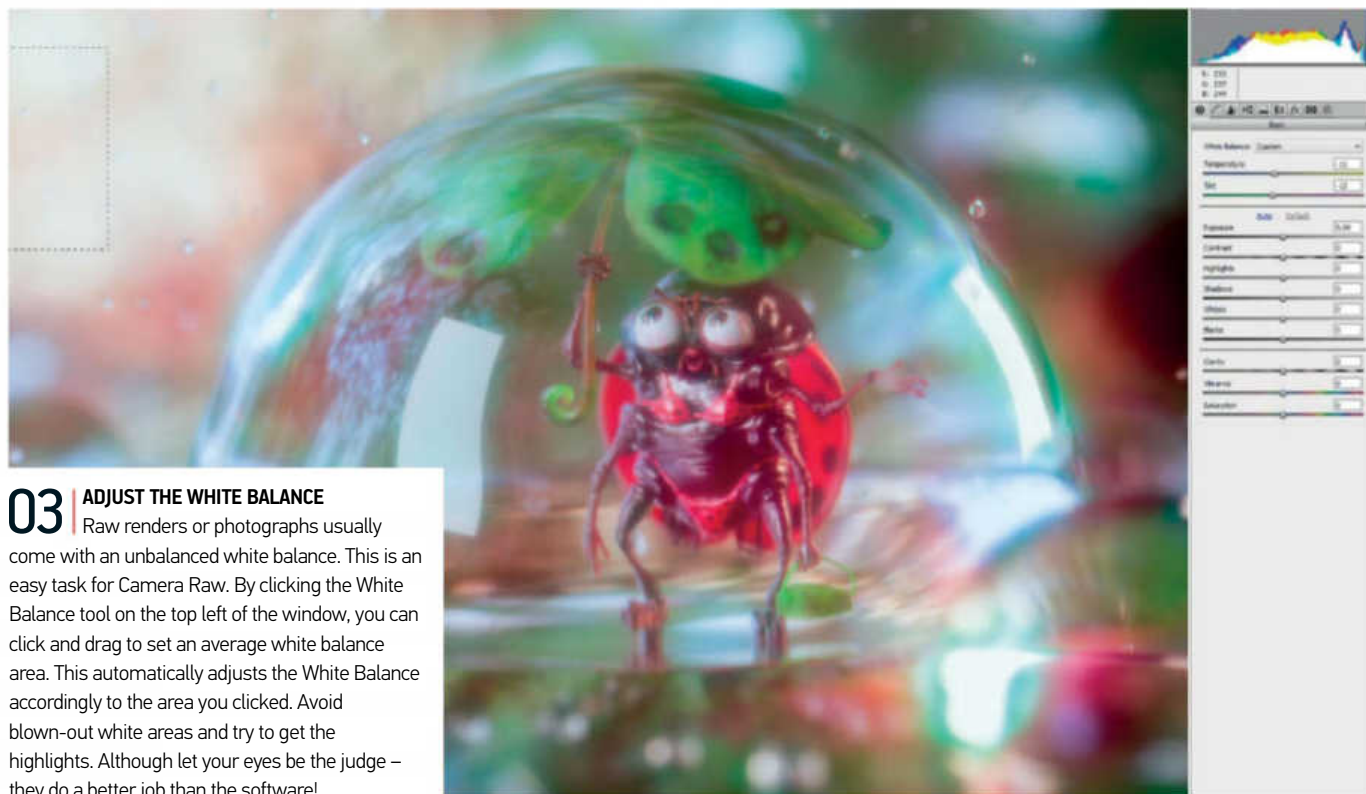


01 CREATE A BOKEH

By using Filter>Blur Gallery>Field Blur, you'll be able to create really cool bokeh effects as if you were shooting a blurred background. Your original image's resolution doesn't matter, just resize it up to a decent size and apply Field Blur to it. Play with the Light Bokeh, Bokeh Color and Light Range to get it the way you want it.

02 MAKE IT SMART

In the new Photoshop versions, you can right-click a layer and convert it to a Smart Object. Filters can be applied to it such as Camera Raw and stay editable. Just go Filter>Camera Raw Filter once your layer becomes smart. This means you can edit your Camera Raw settings at any time instead of creating presets as it used to be in older versions of the software. You can also double-click the layer to adjust the opacity of your filter as well as apply a mask to it.



03 ADJUST THE WHITE BALANCE

Raw renders or photographs usually come with an unbalanced white balance. This is an easy task for Camera Raw. By clicking the White Balance tool on the top left of the window, you can click and drag to set an average white balance area. This automatically adjusts the White Balance accordingly to the area you clicked. Avoid blown-out white areas and try to get the highlights. Although let your eyes be the judge – they do a better job than the software!

04 | EXPERIMENT WITH THE CAMERA RAW BASICS

Play around with the Camera Raw Settings. This will allow you to avoid too much work with your layer adjustments. Camera Raw works with 16 and 32-bit range. This means you have double or triple your usual 8-bit range image. Working with 32-bits gives you the power to turn a day scene into a night scene if you wish. Temperature, Exposure and Clarity are very popular in the Camera Raw world. Although you should try to do the least work you can. Thinking about your render and/or your photography first saves a lot of Photoshop time.



05 | ADJUST COLOUR WITH CAMERA RAW

One of the hidden things in the Camera Raw filter is the HSL/Grayscale tab. In there you can adjust colours with hue, saturation or luminance. It's a kind of super-powered Selective Color. You should be careful to not damage the pixels as this is a very selective tool, which separates colours in three different ways, so you might get colour aberrations if you play more than you should. Again, let your eyes be the judge and the Smart Object filter be your hero if you decide to change it afterwards.



06 | BE SURE TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE CAMERA RAW SMART FILTER

After playing with the Camera Raw settings you will end up with a more balanced image. Exposure, Temperature, Clarity and HSL balances should allow you to get the most out of your render/photograph. So before you start layer adjusting your file, you should try to get the most out of your Camera Raw Smart Filter.



07 | USE A REFRACTION PASS

Thanks to the Refraction Pass, there was no need to stamp out the reflection of the light boxes on the surface of the droplets. This is one of the best things when working with CGI.

“Thinking about your render and/or your photography first saves a lot of Photoshop time”

08 GET RESULTS WITH REFRACTION PASS

By masking the areas where the light boxes were reflected, we were able to erase them from the camera without destroying the data, meaning that we can bring it back at any time we choose. It can be useful to leave your layer masks intact rather than clicking Apply Layer Mask.



09 ADD EXTRA DROPLETS

To add depth to the image, extra droplets were rendered to give the overall 3D perspective feel. We always try to play with the Z axis, meaning the object's distance from the camera. Every time you play with out of focus elements on the foreground and/or background you add depth to your image.



10 USE GRADING

Grading is what we call the folder with all of our layer adjustments. It allows us to keep the file organised and to quickly visualise what the adjustment layers are doing to the image by clicking the eye button on the left side of each layer. It is

always good to exaggerate your settings so you can find the right set. Don't be afraid to exaggerate. Although ask yourself how much you liked each adjustment by using the Opacity levels on the top right side of your Layers tab.



11 ADD WARMTH WITH COLOR BALANCE

Color Balance is one way to add a nice sunny feel to your image. Click Image>Adjustments>Color Balance or set up an adjustment layer on the bottom of your Layers tab and then go to the Yellow bar on the Highlights. You will see how it becomes brighter and warmer. You should try a bit of Red as well.



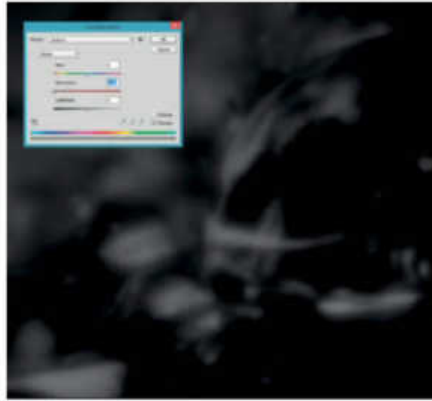
12 | ADD WARMTH WITH PHOTO FILTER

Another way to give a nice warm and sunny feel is Photo Filter in Layer>New adjustment layer or at the bottom of the Layers tab. You can choose one of the standard settings or apply a custom colour as well as change the opacity of it. Try to not to overdo it. Photo Filter can make images look colourised and Photoshop looks better when it is invisible! Use Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+F as an alternative way to fade any adjustments you make.

■ QUICK TIP: FADE ADJUSTMENTS

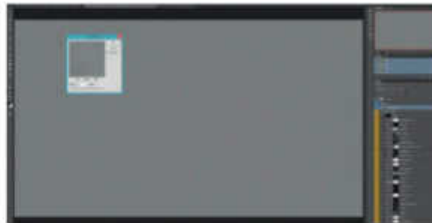
Use Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+F as an alternative way to fade any adjustments you make. This keyboard shortcut fades the opacity of the previous step you've made,

so for example, if you've just duplicated your work onto a single layer and run a High Pass filter over it, it will let you fade down the opacity quickly and easily.



13 | GET A DREAMY LOOK

Bloom is one of our favourite kinds of filter. Select your whole image with Cmd/Ctrl+A and copy with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+C, paste on top with Cmd/Ctrl+V and use Saturation set to 0 with Cmd/Ctrl+U. This will give you a greyscale layer of the image. Then use Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) or Curves (Cmd/Ctrl+M) to darken the layer to the point you can only see the highlights. Apply Gaussian Blur from Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Use something between 10-30. Convert the blend mode to Screen. Boom! This will give that dreamy feel to the image.



14 | USE HIGH PASS TO SHARPEN

High Pass is a nice way to make the image sharper and keep it as a layer. Select your whole image with Cmd/Ctrl+A and copy with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+C, paste on top with Cmd/Ctrl+V and use Saturation set to 0 with Cmd/Ctrl+U. Then go Filter>Other>High Pass. Use something between 1-5. Then apply Overlay or Soft Light as the blend mode.

15 | CMYK AND GO!

Once the image is ready, make sure it looks just as good in CMYK. CMYK should not be too hard if you visualise it during the process. By clicking Cmd/Ctrl+Y you can check which colours are too saturated. There's no point printing a colour that only looks good on the screen. Convert your image to CMYK in Image>Mode. Coated Fogra 39 is one of the popular CMYK settings.







JAR OF GREENS

JON-LOCK

FREELANCER JON-LOCK IS PLANNING TO CREATE AN ILLUSTRATIVE STORYBOOK, WITH THIS STRIKING IMAGE AS A START POINT

Jon-Lock (jon-lock.deviantart.com), who graduated from Cal State University, says that Jar of Greens was "inspired by childhood, nature, the axolotls, and a wonderful watercolor artist who goes by the name Koyamori." The process was one of building up the image gradually.

Jon-Lock explains: "I kept on using the Hard Round brush to make the painting more clear and refined, especially for the leaves. I wanted to make each and every plant look uniform and yet, unique at the same time. So, I explored the different shades of greens to make things more interesting. I zoomed in to make the details and

then I constantly zoomed out to see how the overall painting looks. After everything is refined and finished, I adjusted some of the colours to either make certain colours more apparent or heighten the highlights to give dramatic lighting." Some photo references were used, but then imagination took over.



01 ROUGH IT UP

"First, I did a rough sketch with a default Hard Round brush on the first layer. I always lower the Opacity of the brush to around 40-50% whenever I do rough sketches. On a new layer, I used the Rectangular Marquee tool to create the shape of the jar."



© Jon-Lock

02 CONTAIN THE CREATIVITY

"I used the Gradient tool to make the jar look transparent. The Opacity of the gradient is around 30-40%. On the next layer, I started blocking in colours with the Soft Round brush to get the base/foundation colours needed for the painting. The Opacity varies from 70-100%. Since I wanted to make this painting more forest-like, I used some dark blues and greens."

“I wanted to make each and every plant look uniform and yet, unique at the same time. So, I explored the different shades of greens to make things more interesting”



03 FINDING FORM

"Then on another new layer, I went back to the Hard Round brush (this time the Opacity was set to 100%) and I started outlining the plants, animals and the figure. After that, I coloured them in with the desired colour palette and gave the painting more form and shapes."



© Michael Herb



OUR EXPERT

MICHAEL HERB

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Michael Herb is a creative photographer and digital artist. When he's not creating visually intense imagery he likes to unwind in front of the fireplace with a glass of brandy and an illustrated children's book with small words.

SOURCE FILES

On www.filesilo.co.uk/advancedphotoshop you will find all necessary files to re-create this image. There are a few extra images available to take the composite up a level.

CREATE A FLYING EFFECT

LEARN HOW TO EFFECTIVELY AND BELIEVABLY
CREATE A LEVITATION OR FLYING EFFECT

Let's face it, most of us would love to break free from the bounds of gravity and float high above the clouds, soar through the city streets or simply float in mid-air. Unfortunately, aside for a few anomalies, humans are just not meant for unaided flight. Fortunately for all of us Photoshop addicts, we can achieve digitally

what is simply not possible in reality. Flying, levitation or floating is really a simple process that can be achieved in several different ways.

The simplest way is to use a stool or chair and have your model balance on the stool in a way so that you can remove the stool in Photoshop. The second way, with the right model, is easier yet. Simply have them jump and capture them in the

air. In post-production, you'll be able to position them to appear much higher off the ground.

The third way is always the preferred, but also the most labour-intensive to set up: a suspension harness attached to a suspension rig or properly installed ceiling mount. For the sake of simplicity we are going to discuss method two for this tutorial.

WORK IN PROGRESS FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP



Progress 1: From 3D to 2D



Progress 2: Time to add some drama!



Progress 3: A finished image!



01 START FROM THE BOTTOM

Open City.jpg. Click File>Place Embedded and find the file Clouds.jpg. Scale the clouds to cover the width of the image. Hold Alt/Opt and double-click the city background in the layers palette. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+{ to drag the clouds layer below the city layer. With your preferred masking method, mask the original sky out to show the new dramatic sky.



02 STEP OUT ON THE LEDGE

Click File>Place and find the file ledge.jpg. You will notice that the ledge isn't very high up! When shooting background elements, never take things at face value. Sometimes the most unlikely object can be the best option. Mask out the ledge as you see in the picture. The ledge will need to be skewed. Click Cmd/Ctrl+T and then right-click within the box and click Distort. Using the reference file match the perspective of the ledge.

“When shooting background elements, never take things at face value. Sometimes the most unlikely object can be the best option”



03 CUT HIM INTO PIECES!

Our model Stephan is a cirque acrobat with the ability to leap nearly 1.5 metres in the air. However, to illustrate levitation without the need for an acrobat we will merge the lower half and upper half of our star to achieve the flying effect. From FileSilo, open Stephan-Lower.jpg and Stephan-upper.jpg. Mask out his upper and lower body. Use his waist as the border between upper and lower.



04 JOIN HIM BACK TOGETHER

With both halves of the model masked, drag the lower half into the upper half comp. You will have to scale the lower half a bit to get the two pieces matching. Once matched, group the two halves by selecting both layers in the layers palette and hitting Cmd/Ctrl+G. Name the group whatever you'd like as long as it's descriptive and easily identifiable. Drag the newly created group into the background comp.



05 MAKE THE MODEL FLY

Right-click on the group containing Stephan and click Convert to Smart Object. This will enable you to scale him up or down without losing quality. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T, right click and hit Flip Horizontal. Position Stephan so that he appears to be flying off from the ledge. The further you place him the more impressive he becomes. Add a layer mask to the newly created Smart Object. With a soft brush set to 30% Opacity, brush around the shirt to help amplify the wet look.



06 ADD HELICOPTERS FOR ADDED CONTEXT

The helicopters serve a few purposes. First and foremost they provide a source for the excellent lighting Stephan has. Without them you'd be left guessing where the light comes from. They also add a nice touch of awesome to the image. Open Heli-Small.jpg and Heli-Large.jpg. Completely mask Heli-Small from its background. Mask out only the lower third of Heli-Large. Drag and drop both helicopters to the main comp. Position and scale the helicopters in the scene.



07 ADD SOME MOTION

Blurring the rotor a bit will give the look of motion. Select the Heli-Small layer and hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to make a duplicate. Right-click on the copy and hit Apply Layer Mask. Erase everything but the rotor. Click Filter>Blur Gallery>Spin Blur. Mark your blur point in the centre of the rotor. Adjust the blur angle until desired blur level is achieved. Hit Enter to commit the blur. Select the mask on your original Heli-Small layer. With a Soft brush, mask away the ends of the rotor.

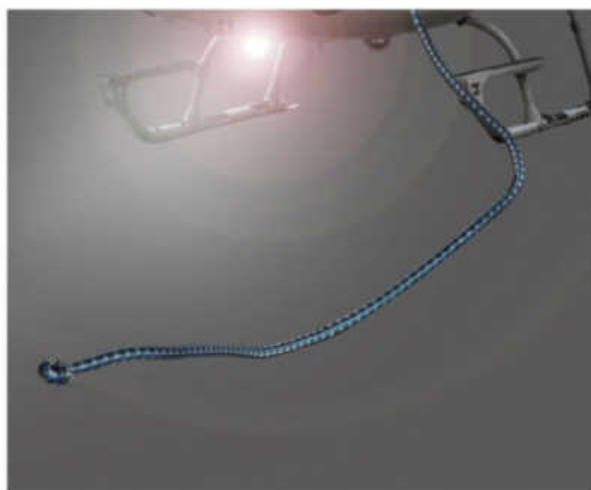
■ QUICK TIP: MINIMISE HARD EDGES

When masking, remember: nothing has a totally hard edge. To soften the edges of your masks you can double-click on the mask and adjust the Feather or select your Blur tool and, with Opacity at approximately 30%, trace the edge of your mask. This will help add a touch more realism to your composites.



08 ADD A ROPE

He may be able to fly but that doesn't mean you can't throw him a rope. Click File>Place and find Rope.jpg. Scale and rotate accordingly to match the reference file. Mask the rope, cutting off the end in a way that allows a new end to be painted in. Make a new layer named 'Rope End'. With a hard-edged black brush, paint a semicircle to mimic a rope end. Sample a light colour from the rope and make dots on the end to look like rope strands.

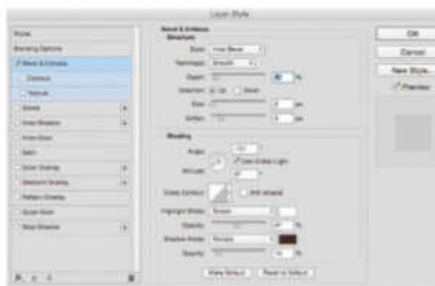


09 TURN ON THE LIGHT

Often in photography we don't see the light sources and are left guessing what is causing the harsh edge lights or coloured highlights. We've all been there saying, "There's no way he could be lit like that!" The helicopters give the light on our model a source. Make a new layer named 'heli-lights'. With white selected, use a Soft brush with Opacity between 10-30%. Brush a large circle centering on the helicopter's spotlight. Set Opacity to 100% and paint in the light to effectively turn on the light.



10 | CREATE A BEAM OF LIGHT
The small helicopter also needs its light turned on. Repeat the process from Step 9 on a new layer. However, instead of a large circular pattern, paint a long stroke to achieve a beam of light. The light will naturally be more spread out and dimmer the further away from the helicopter it gets. This can be achieved by using a layer mask or simply erasing the beam with a low-opacity soft brush set to Erase. If the beam isn't right, try adjusting it with Free Transform before erasing and starting over.



11 | GET THE MODEL WET
Let's add some fake water. Make a new layer named 'water drops'. With a white brush set to 85% Hardness, make a random line anywhere on the model. Add a Bevel and Emboss layer style to the water drops layer. Adjust the settings as follows. Style: Inner Bevel, Depth 40-80%, Size 1-2px, Soften 1-3px, Shading Angle: -15°, Highlight Opacity: 47%, Shadow Opacity: 14%. Select the shadow colour and hover over and select a dark shadow colour within the model. It should be a deep brownish-red colour.

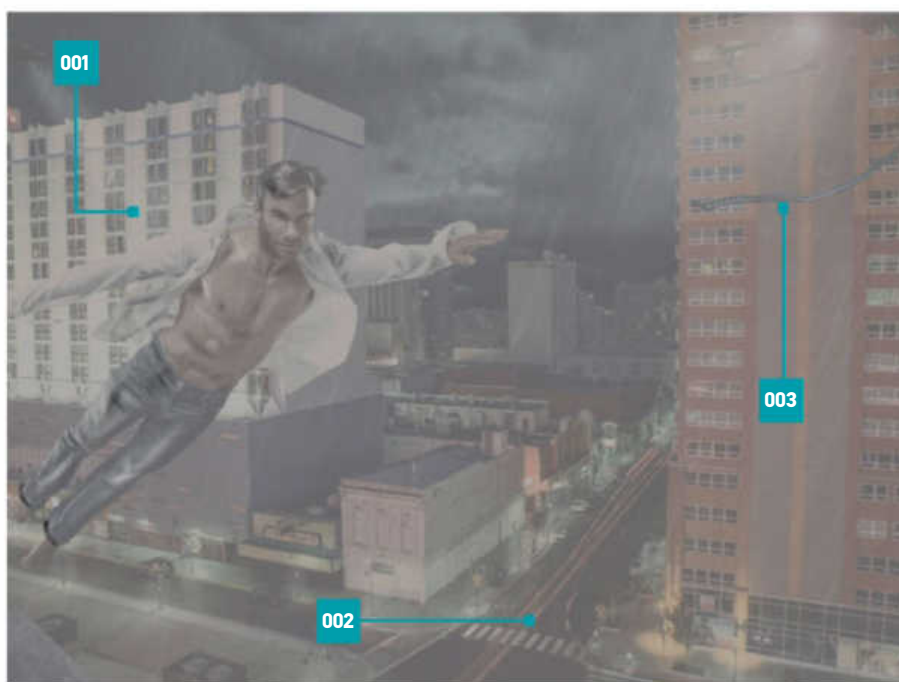
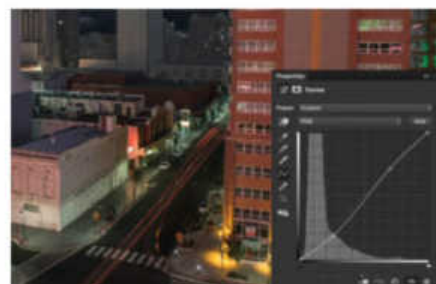


12 | MAKE THE WATER CLEAR
With the Layer Style set commit the changes by hitting enter. The water on the subject should be clear with no tint. To achieve this select fill from the upper right corner of the layers pallet and drop it all the way to 0. Paint water drops and drips on him. This will be more or less a matter of taste so experiment until happy. The internet is the best place for reference. Search for water on skin or water droplets to see how water will look.

■ QUICK TIP: PLACING REFLECTIONS

The 'devil is in the details' – the more time you spend on the details the more believable the final result will be. When adding reflections in the background, pay

attention to all the elements in the image. Ask yourself, "What would have a reflection?" Dry areas under cover won't reflect while wet areas will.



001 | INTENSIFY THE HIGHLIGHTS Set your brush Hardness to 40% and find highlights throughout the background. Dodge those areas to intensify the wet look.
002 | DEEPEN THE SHADOWS With black, deepen shadows in the background. This will start to give a 3D look to the image.
003 | DARKEN THE CHOPPERS Create Dodge and Burn layers. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt+G to create clipping masks. Darken areas of the chopper seen in red.

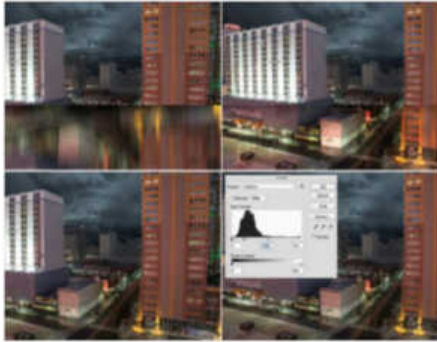
13 | DODGE AND BURN
Dodging and burning will not only accentuate the model's already muscular physique, it will allow for the adding of specular highlights to help with the wet look. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N, name the layer 'D&B', set the blend mode to Overlay and

check the box for Fill with Overlay Neutral Color. Hit Enter. With a Soft brush set to 0% Hardness and 10% Opacity, paint along the natural shadows with black and the natural highlights with white. Build up the layers of white and black to really make things pop.

14 | GET THE WET LOOK
When it rains, several things happen. The environment darkens and the contrast and specular increase. Add a Curves adjustment layer above the City layer. Click on the lower half of the Curve to add a shadow point. Slightly drag this down to deepen the shadows. Repeat on the upper part of the Curve and drag up to increase the highlights. Add a layer mask and fill with black. Paint white to reveal the Curves adjustment only on the road.



15 | ADD REFLECTIONS
The next step in achieving the 'wet look' is to add reflections to the road. Select the City layer and Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate this layer. Right-click on the layer in the layers palette and select Apply Layer Mask. Duplicate the layer once more and turn off the eye directly to the left to hide this layer. Select the original duplicate and go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Select an amount that blurs the details of the layer similar to the step image here.



16 WORK ON THE REFLECTIONS

Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T and then right-click and hit Flip Vertical. Align the top of the layer along the bottom third of the image. Change the blending mode to Overlay. Hit Cmd/Ctrl +L and adjust the Levels to match the image. Add a layer mask and hit Cmd/Ctrl +I to invert the white to black. Paint white to reveal the reflections only on the road. Click the eye on the duplicate city layer you made in Step 15.



17 CONSIDER THE SIDEWALK REFLECTIONS

Reflections in the sidewalk will be a bit more clear since the concrete is both smoother and receives less traffic during rain. Select the duplicate city layer. With your preferred selection method, select the right side of the smaller white building. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate the selection. Hit Cmd/Ctrl +T to Free Transform. Right-click and select Flip Vertical. Right-click again and select Distort. While holding Shift and Alt, grab the centre control point and move up or down to match the angle of the building.



18 WORK MORE ON THE REFLECTIONS

When the angle has been matched, hit Enter. Change the blending mode to Overlay and reduce the Opacity of the layer to 30%. Hit Cmd/Ctrl +L and adjust the slider to match the image. Next make a layer mask and with a soft brush mask away some of the hard edges and parts of the building that protrude into the street. Repeat this process on as many pieces of the buildings and objects as needed to achieve the effect.



19 MAKE IT RAIN

Install the Real Rain Drops brush from FileSilo. Load and select the brush. Create a new layer at the top of your layer stack. Select white and click and drag around the image. Select Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and select a distance that best matches the reference photo. Double-click on the rain layer thumbnail in the layers palette. Drag the left-most control point towards the right until the rain starts to disappear. Hold Alt/Option and drag the left control point to the left to feather the effect. This is called Blend If.



“Often a very subjective process, colour grading can be the salt and pepper to a finished image”

20 USE COLOUR GRADING

Often a very subjective process, colour grading can be the salt and pepper to a finished image. Sprinkled with care it can elevate the image; carelessly slopped and it becomes a cheap effect. Create two Curves adjustment layers. Name the first

layer 'Tones' and set the blending mode to Luminosity. Name the second 'Colour' and set the blending mode to Color. Select both layers and group them. Name the group Colour Grading. Mimic the diagram here. The reference photo has a few additional enhancements.

“I also wanted to create something from (computer generated) wood for a long time,” he adds, “so this was the inception of the idea”



© Jeremy Kool



WOODEN RHINOCEROS BEETLE JEREMY KOOL

AUSTRALIAN JEREMY KOOL IS CURRENTLY WORKING IN BERLIN AS A GAME CHARACTER ARTIST, BUT HE STILL HAS TIME FOR HIS PERSONAL IMAGES

Jeremy Kool (www.society6.com/jeremykool) has wanted to have a rhino beetle on his wall for a long time, but he didn't want to buy a dead one, so he decided to use his Photoshop, Maya and V-Ray skills to create himself one. "I also wanted to create something from (computer

generated) wood for a long time," he adds, "so this was the inception of the idea."

His process is a straightforward mix of Photoshop and 3D, with Photoshop used at the beginning as well as the end: "I use Photoshop to create the textures," he explained, then he "modelled the creature in Maya and

then rendered the images in V-Ray. From there it's back to Photoshop to compile the renders and create the final image." And Wooden Rhinoceros Beetle is the first in a series. Kool is currently working on a Cicada, and then he's going to tackle a Long Horned Beetle. "The series will be called Beetles of Wood," Kool adds.



01 TIME TO TILE

I sourced photos that are lit evenly so that I can easily make them tile-able. I tiled the image by duplicating the layer and using the Offset filter. Then I masked out the seams and did some hand painting and cloned over problem areas.



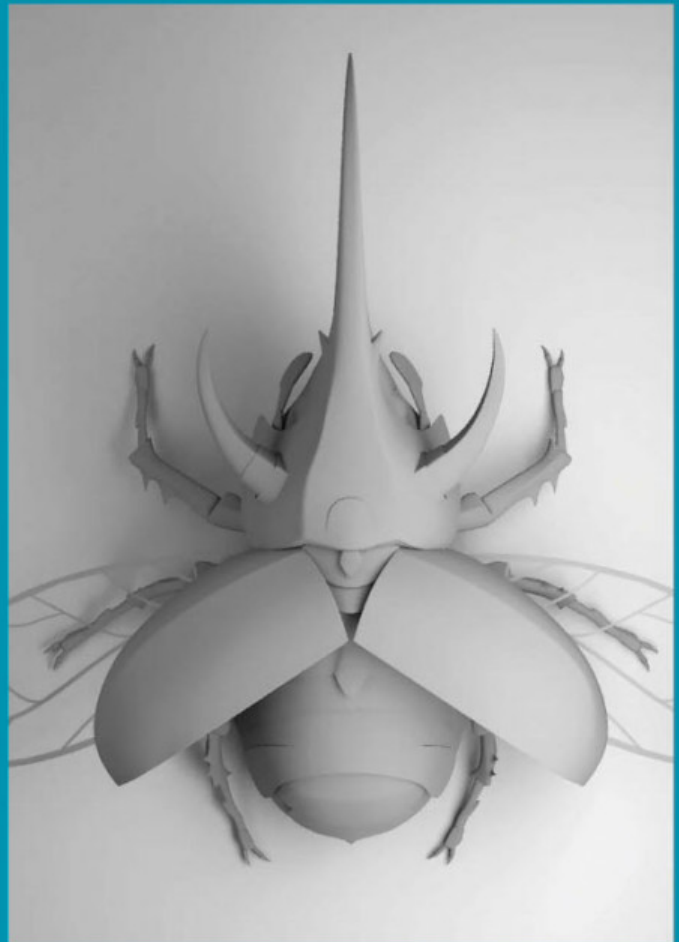
02 BACK TO BLACK

I used the same image and Hue/Saturation to create the darker texture. I also needed a displacement map that helps with detail and lighting at render time. To create this it was a simple matter of using a Black and White effects layer and Levels layer to get the black and white details of the wood.



03 THE WINGS OF A BEETLE

I needed some wings for my beetle, so I hand-painted a black-and-white image that will function as a mask for the fine detail of the wings. Then, with all my textures set up, I was ready to open up Maya and model.



04 MAYA TO V-RAY TO PHOTOSHOP

The modelling was all done in Maya and then I rendered out the different passes in V-Ray. Now the fun part was ready to begin, as I went back to Photoshop to finish the image.



05 SHARPEN UP
Once I had taken the render files back into Photoshop, I then started by using a Smart Sharpen filter on the render to make those details sing.



06 IN AND OUT OF FOCUS
I then used a Lens Blur using the Z-depth pass as a layer mask. This created a depth of field effect and really enhanced the realism of the piece. The Lens Blur gives me a lot of control over the blur amount and focal depth.



07 SHINE A LIGHT
To bring the lighting up, I duplicated and merged all layers (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E) and set this to Screen. I set the opacity quite low, but I find that this lightens up the details of the image without blowing out the details.



MATERIALS MATTER

KOOL LIKES TO CHALLENGE HIMSELF TO CREATE A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT CG MATERIALS

Detailed textures are critical to Kool's work. As well as the wooden beetle, he also creates animals that look like they're made of paper, and has rendered himself in soft puppet form. He explains: "I started by sketching the concept in Photoshop. Once I was happy with the design, I created the mesh in Maya and then spent a long time in Photoshop getting the felt texture looking convincing."



08 WARM IT UP
To finish, I once again duplicated and merged all the layers (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E) and set this to Overlay at 15% Opacity. This really helps deepen the colours and pop the highlights.

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CONTROL TONE AND COLOUR IN SCENES

PAINT A WHIMSICAL LANDSCAPE BY USING THE POWER OF LINE, VALUE, AND COLOUR

In the following tutorial, you will become skilled in painting a digital fantasy landscape in Photoshop that will resemble magnificent worlds like the ones in Nintendo's *Legend of Zelda* or Disney's *Maleficent*. Since this demonstrated painting style is quite loose, a pen tablet is strongly recommended. Before diving into Photoshop's intuitive interface, research the paintings of Albert Bierstadt, particularly *Among The Sierra Nevada Mountains*.

Bierstadt and other Hudson River School painters mimicked Romanticism using atmospheric perspective in their landscapes to emphasise depth, and saturated colours for focal interest. Similarly, after we finish sketching the line art and placing our grey values, we will explore how different colours and brush blend modes affect the layer underneath. Bierstadt also emphasised scale and grandeur. Mountain ranges, waterfalls, and vegetation were not necessarily true-to-size, which led to a more

fantasy-like painting. When following this tutorial, search the web for various landscapes such as canyons and waterfalls for inspiration, but do not be hindered by the laws of nature. Let your imagination run wild. For an effective painting, it's also important to understand the elements of design, such as scale and balance. If you are a bit rusty, simply search for 'design elements and principles' to brush up so that you can start this tutorial with confidence.



OUR EXPERT

ADAM VARGA
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Adam Varga specialises in environment concept art and matte painting. He believes combining your knowledge of traditional art fundamentals and emerging digital platforms is the key to successful digital art.

SOURCE FILES

On FileSilo (www.filesilo.co.uk/advancedphotoshop) you can get the brushes used in this piece, a greyscale version of the piece for colour practice, and a real time video of the painting process.

WORK IN PROGRESS FROM SKETCH TO FINAL PAINTING



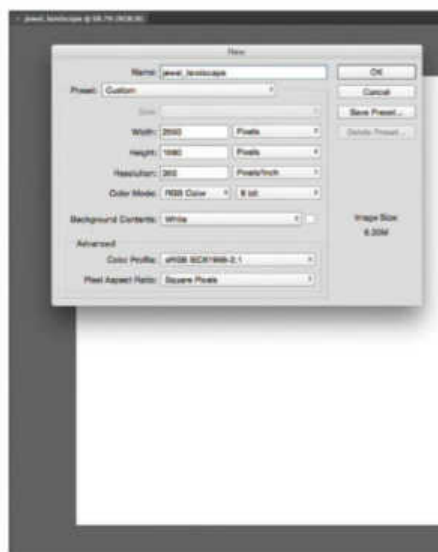
Progress 1: Sketch line art



Progress 2: Add greyscale value



Progress 3: Add colour and details



01 SET UP PARAMETERS

Before beginning a painting, ensure all settings are correct. Now is a good time to download the brushes from FileSilo. Create a new document at 2050 pixels width, 1080 pixels height, 300dpi resolution, and 8 bit with a white background colour. In the top right corner of Photoshop, make sure your workspace is set to Painting. Go to Window>Brush and check Shape Dynamics and Transfer as well as the small locks next to them. Selecting pen pressure as your control, edit the minimum diameters of both to suit your pen tablet preferences.



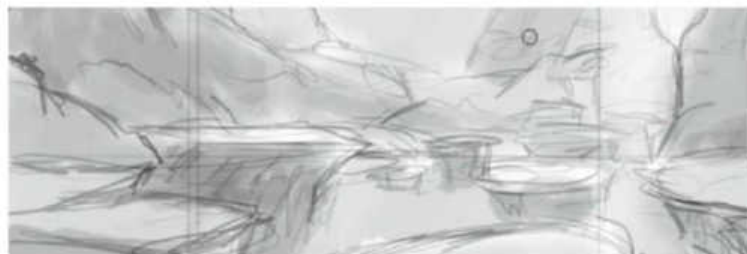
02 DEVELOP LINE ART

Now that all our settings are in place, create a standard hard round brush at about 7px size and about 70% Hardness. Hit the D key to make sure your default black foreground colour is active, and begin drawing. Sketch outlines of mountain ranges and cliffs, working background to foreground. Keeping in mind the rule of thirds, draw the horizon towards the bottom line and major cliffs at the vertical lines. Keep shapes generally loose, as they will be refined later.

“Flip the canvas often, as elements tend to shift in the direction of your dominant hand”

03 ESTABLISH GREYSCALE

Once you have a decent line art drawing you can begin placing the greyscale values. First, select a middle grey, #555 in the colour picker window, and change your brush to about 170px in size and about 10% Hardness. At the top, choose Multiply as the brush's blend mode and reduce Opacity to about 30%. Fill in your outlines with grey, using pen pressure to paint lighter values in the distance and darker in the foreground. Your line art should still be visible at this point.



04 LASSO IN SHADOWS

To emphasise the shadows on the cliff sides, tap L for the Lasso tool, and trace around the bottom portion of cliffs or mountains that will be in shadow. Hold down Shift to add to the selection, and draw rock shapes on the left and a few more crystal-shaped ones protruding near the mid-ground. Select the Charcoal brush from Photoshop's Dry Media brush set and paint in a dark grey. Shade in these areas using random strokes and keeping the Opacity high at around 90%.



05 ADD ATMOSPHERIC HAZE

Flip the canvas often, as elements tend to shift in the direction of your dominant hand. Now that your shapes are more solid you can select a large 500px Soft Round brush at 0% Hardness. Change your painting mode to Overlay and, using the colour picker (Eyedropper tool), spot-select and lightly paint a light grey in the background, and dark grey in our foreground. Play with Color Dodge as well to show a bright light source, which in this painting is beyond the mountains towards the right.



■ QUICK TIP: PRACTICE PAINTING

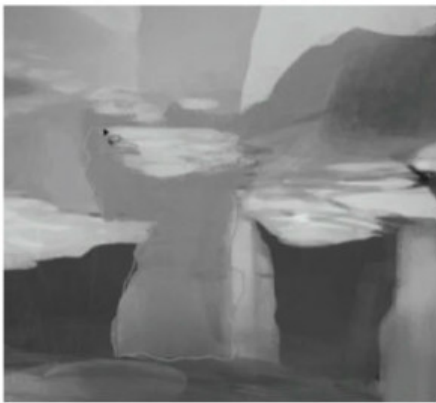
Reading each tutorial step may become technically overwhelming. Viewing the real time video of the painting and practicing on a blank canvas with each brush and its

different settings is highly encouraged. Much like in oil painting, it's not always the actual brush and paint that make the piece, but rather your technique.



06 REFINE YOUR SHAPES

Increase the Hardness to about 60%, reduce the size of the brush, and begin painting over the general shapes for refining. Lassoing comes in very handy at this point, as you can define sharp edges and create jutting cliffs in a matter of seconds by simply painting in your selection. Use your Eyedropper tool (Alt/Opt) continuously in this step to match the particular area you are painting in. Begin using the Rock brushes at varied sizes for rock highlights.



07 REPEAT AND RANDOMISE

At this point you simply repeat the previous three steps. Lasso, add highlights and shadows, and refine the shape. Play around with the downloaded brushes and try the Rock and Pebble brushes for hard surfaces and the Cloud ones for haze and our waterfall mist. Don't forget to use your different painting modes to achieve more contrasting values. Multiply adds shadow and Overlay/Color Dodge emphasises brights. Staying with a high opacity, detail the grounds, the underlying rocks, and use a flat brush with a white (#111) for the waterfalls.



08 ENHANCE THE BACKGROUND

Since the background is a bit bland at this point, use the Lasso tool to carve out large rock formations and paint a grey darker than the sky beneath using a 0% Hardness brush sized at 400px or above. Keep the selection intact, and paint in Overlay mode towards the top to darken and in Soft Light to add haze towards the horizon. Now, select the rock brushes and paint textured highlights and shadows, altering size, opacity, and blend modes.



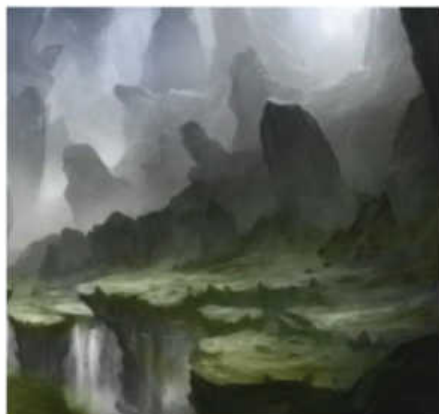
09 ADD SOME LITTLE ROCKS

Use the Lasso tool and scatter several various jagged-edged small rock shapes around the canvas, emphasising cliff edges and the foot of mountains. Choose a Soft Round brush and fill in with grey (#222). Tap V for the Move tool, hold down the Alt/Opt key, and drag a duplicate layer. The layer right under the current one in the layer window will be used as our shadow layer. Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur, angle the layer proportionate to your light source, and lower the distance to about 30 pixels.



10 FINALISE GREYSCALE

Before heading into colouring, ensure that values, contrast, and details are sufficient. Use the Rock small brush at 100% Opacity, 60-80px. In the brush window (F5), keep Shape Dynamics and Transfer set to about 10% minimum pen pressure. In brush mode, hold the Alt/Opt key to sample your greys and vigorously detail the landscape, adding grass textures and rock highlights in the distant mountains. The Kekai brush can be used for small bushes or flowers. Alternate your brushes frequently and don't stick with just one painting technique.



11 MAKE A COLOUR OVERLAY LAYER
Create a new layer, name it 'Colour Overlay', and change the blend mode to Color. Open the colour window and choose hex# 9daa88. Select a 500px soft brush and paint the greens accordingly. Select another darker green and paint over the shadows. Choose hex# 7b92b5 for the background, and #bef5ff for the waterfalls and atmospheric haze near the horizon line. Again, select from various brushes and alter their settings so you get a precise overlay.



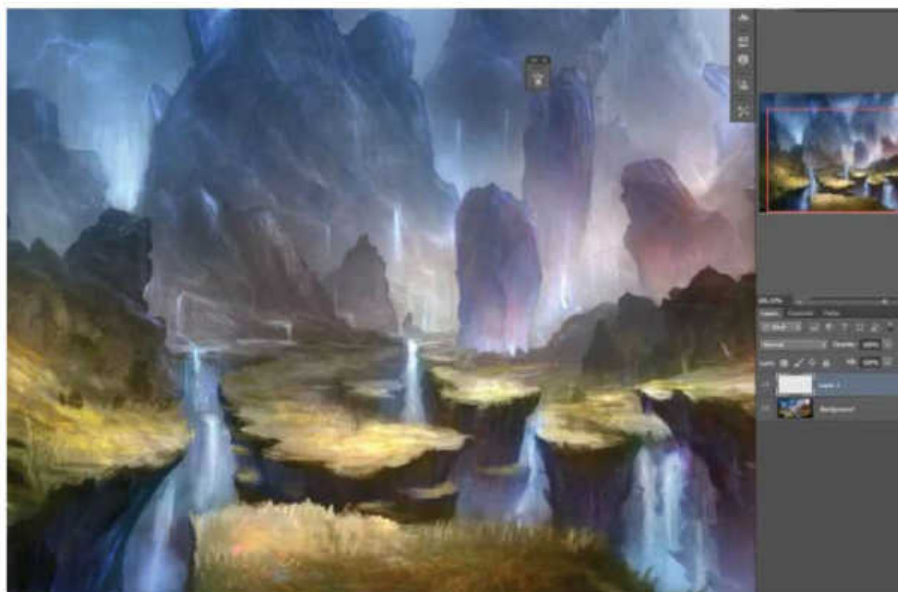
12 ADJUST HUE AND SATURATION
Create a new Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and set Hue at -15, Saturation at +41, and Lightness at +5. Right-click the layer name and create a clipping mask. Get in the habit of always using adjustment layers to edit colour or brightness, as they can always be tweaked or masked later on. Now, create a Color Balance adjustment layer and edit the Shadow, Midtone, and Highlight levels to your liking. For this particular piece, Midtones were set at (+8, -7, +2), Highlights at (-11, -12, -1), and Shadows at (0, 0, +13).



13 ADD SOME COLOUR DETAILS
Now is a good time to open your Color panel by going to Window>Color. Use a variety of the loaded brushes, and set them to an Opacity above 80%. The Drawer brush is excellent for grass or rough textures, and the Texture Draw brush, rotated 90 degrees, is great for grass. Use a big soft brush for the waterfall mist, and a 15px Hard Round brush for distant lightning. Remember, Color Dodge and Overlay painting modes can convey highlights so use those in conjunction with your brush selection and colour choices.



14 INSERT RAYS OF LIGHT
There are two methods to achieving rays of light. One is painting with the Light Beam brush in Overlay mode. Or as shown in the video, you can create a new layer and select either the Render Scratches or Rock Highlights brushes at 1400px and 100% Opacity and paint a light beige and light blue colour. Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and set the angle to -90° and the distance to about 250 pixels. Then go to Edit>Transform>Distort and pan the bottom corners outward and the top corners inward so the light beams appear more radial.



15 FINALISE COLOUR
During the final portion of the greyscale painting, you detailed the landscape. Refer to Step 10 and repeat this process while exploring all brushes. Load Photoshop's default Dry Media brushes and select the Charcoal Flat brush at high opacity for streams, refining the waterfall, and mountain ridges.

Use a 400px soft brush at low opacity and Color Dodge painting mode to really emphasise the waterfalls, sun, and clouds. Finally, create a new adjustment layer for Color Balance, Brightness and Contrast, or Hue and Saturation and tweak your painting to perfection.

QUICK TIP: CREATE NON-DESTRUCTIVELY

Use all the error-proofing capabilities that Photoshop offers. Once you are confident in the path of your piece, go to Image>Duplicate to create an identical canvas.

Make a habit of using the fill and adjustment layers, located at the bottom of the layers window. These steps will ensure you won't have to keep tapping Undo.

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AUTUMN FOREVER

GUY SHIELDS

MELBOURNE-BASED ILLUSTRATOR GUY SHIELDS CREATED AUTUMN FOREVER FOR THE QUARTERLY KILL YOUR DARLINGS. HE EXPLAINS HOW HE DID IT

Illustrator Guy Shields (www.guyshield.com) explains "They give me free rein with the cover concept.... And with autumn around the corner, I decided to make that the focus of that cover. I just remember having a bit of a brain spark and imagining someone super-imposing the

vibrant red foliage onto the wall behind an otherwise naked tree. To make the narrative more interesting, I introduced some police officers on the left, spectating rather than arresting, as if to suggest that in this case, admiration of culture overtook persecution."

Shields explains that sometimes he splits his images "into foreground, middleground [and] background layer sets, so I can control the sense of depth. I'll set about building up the colours over several layers (in some cases, hundreds) and finish the piece by adding shading and adjustment layers."

“I just remember having a bit of a brain spark and imagining someone super-imposing the vibrant red foliage onto the wall behind an otherwise naked tree”



01 | SKETCH START

I started with a pencil rough, and then refined it over a lightbox onto a fresh sheet of paper. Then I used a sable brush and india ink to make it nice and black and white. I scanned it into Photoshop at 1200dpi, and then downsampled it to 600dpi.



02 | PERFECT THE TREES

Once scanned, I moved things around to work better within the composition, and I ended up redrawing the tree digitally as I wasn't quite happy with it in the end. Then I converted the line art into layers. I like to work using colour fill layers, which ensures that I have the flexibility to go back and easily change certain colours throughout the process.



03 | SHADES OF AUTUMN

Now I introduce toning and shading, using additional colour fill layers set to Multiply. Then I use key adjustment layers and Gradient Fills, set to Overlay, to bring warmth to the piece and to make the colour a little more harmonious and dynamic.



TASTY TYPE TRICKS

A SIMPLE WAY TO CHEAT AT COMPLEX 3D FOOD TYPOGRAPHY

We have a tastetastic 3D tutorial for you, a way to create complex 3D typography effects without the use of separate rendering programs. It's a simple way to get the rendered effects expected from other software without needing to learn a whole set of other programs. Usually Neil Duerden would render these in a separate program, so we issued him the challenge to create food typography within Photoshop as much as possible and this is the way to do it.

It's worth noting that both Photoshop CS6 (used here) and Photoshop CC both have 3D rendering capabilities, with CC's significantly more evolved than

those of CS6, and promising updates on the horizon. So it is perfectly possible to create 3D typography exclusively in Photoshop, although if you're a 3D whiz then you may want to create some base renders in an alternative program to experiment further with the style. The text here was created in Illustrator and then imported into Photoshop, but CC's improved typography tools mean that you could also create your text in Photoshop, either from scratch or using a pre-existing font.

The tutorial will let you use your own personal judgement and artistic skill so you get the results you want. Let's get ready to render.



OUR EXPERT

NEIL DUERDEN
www.neilduerden.co.uk
@neilduerden

A self confessed Mac monkey, exceeding briefs for blue chip clients globally.

SOURCE FILES

There is a glint overlay supplied for this tutorial on www.filesilo.co.uk/advancedphotoshop. It can also be used for many other applications from car highlights through to cheesy packaging highlights if that's the look you are after.

PREPARING THE BASE

IMPORT THE RENDER PASSES AND CUT OUT THE PLANES



01 | PREP THE COMPOSITION

Create your text in Illustrator or using a pre-existing font and consider how the image will look and the way the text will interact. Use different colours for each word – although these won't be the final ones to be used, they help you see the interaction between the words. Paste the letterforms into Photoshop, making sure the documents are the same size, and arrange them correctly. Make sure each word (or even letter) is on a different layer, and labelled properly.

03 | PLACE THE BASIC LIGHT

Choose your light source direction, select the Global Light from within the 3D palette and then, with the Selection tool, move it to the desired light direction. This can be used for the whole piece in one stroke, but to simplify the tutorial and give us more options later we will do it on a layer-by-layer basis.



02 | GET STARTED WITH 3D

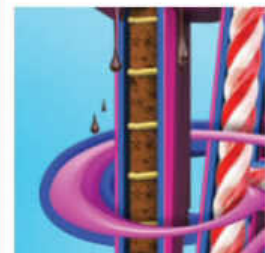
Select the layer you wish to render and go to 3D > New 3D from selected layer. Wait while the computer builds a rough preview. Then in the 3D selection palette, click on the Front Inflation. Look in the Properties palette and you will have many options for texture and colour. Choose the one that looks right for your treatment. You can also alter the colour here by changing the Diffuse values.



WORK IN PROGRESS FROM BASIC TEXT TO EDIBLE LETTERING



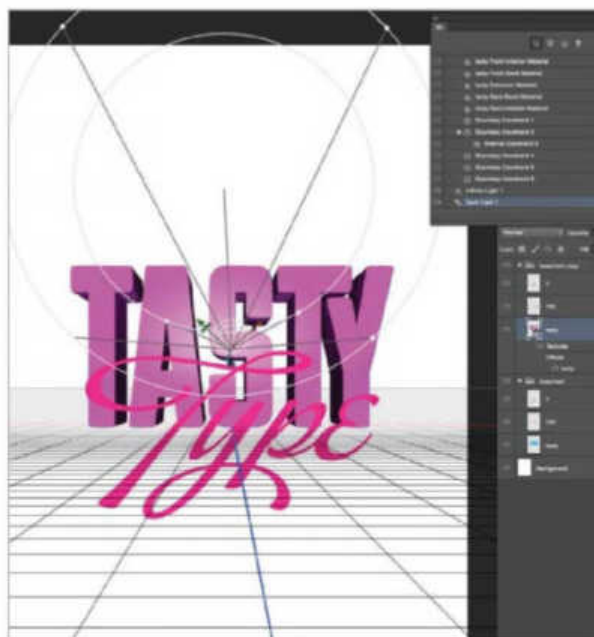
Progress 1: Prepare the base



Progress 2: Add the details

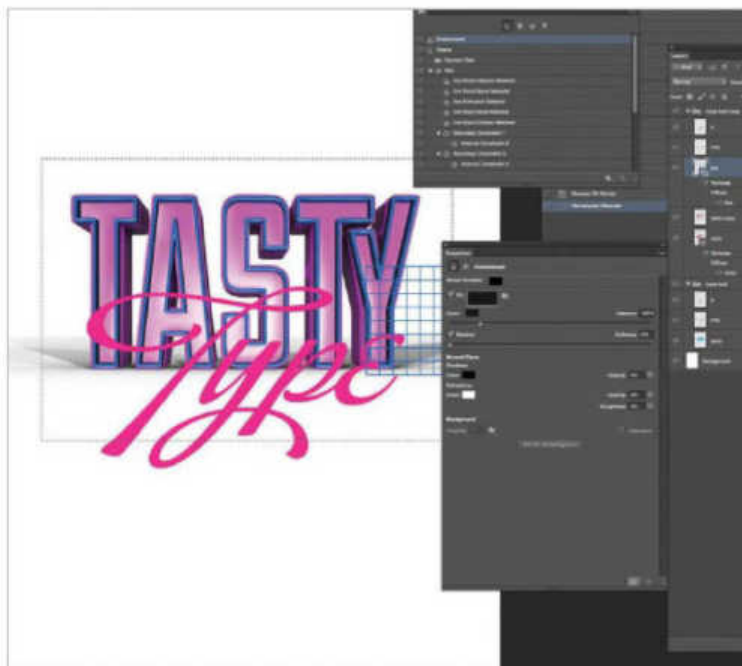


Progress 3: Final touches



04 CREATE HIGHLIGHTS

Click on the new layer icon at the bottom of the 3D palette and select New Spot Light, move this to give the lighting that suits your piece the best. Remember that this will affect all the edge highlighting further down in the process. Then go back to your lighting layers and adjust to get the best look you desire for the type. Now duplicate the layer you are working on. At the bottom of the Properties palette is a small isometric-square icon. Click it to render your text. This may take a while on older or slow machines.



05 RASTERIZE THE LAYER

With the layer you have been working on selected in the Layers palette, right-click and rasterize it. Then go back to your Illustrator file (if using Illustrator; if not, do this in Photoshop) and create the same text with a stroke on. Paste into the document onto a layer above the rasterized layer. Repeat the 3D steps as before, but reduce the Extrusion to a level that looks good. We've used a value of 165 for the example. Also on the 3D palette, select Environment, then in the Properties palette put the Shadows down to 0%. This will remove the shadow over the main rendered body.

QUICK TIP: PLENTY OF RAM

Save regularly as when rendering Photoshop does sometimes decide to throw a spanner in the works! The complex mathematics is sometimes a little too

much and does put a bit of strain on some machines. So if you have the choice, work on a machine that has loads of fast disc space and plenty of RAM!



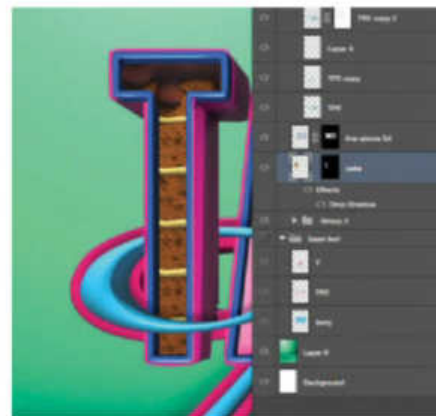
06 DUPLICATE IT

Duplicate and then rasterize this layer as in the previous steps. Then complete the 3D treatment for the rest of the text using the steps as before for your guide. Remember to arrange the lighting to work the same as the other layers and to get the look you require for the final piece as you see it.



07 CLEAN UP THE MATHS ERRORS

As this is a simple tutorial, we have not rendered this text in a 3D program. Photoshop quite often throws up errors in its mathematics. Simply zoom around your text and, using the Clone tool, clean up any areas that have abnormalities. Some edges may have slight edge artefacts; draw a Path the correct shape using the Pen tool, select and delete the extra angles, then clean the areas with the Clone tool again.



08 FOOD TIME

Next we are to add the food element. Choose stock photography food textures that fit into your chosen theme, think of how they will work within the letterforms and then draw Paths around the selected areas you wish to add to your piece. Activate these Paths and then copy the area. Return back to the master artwork and then draw a Path around the area you wish the food to feature on, ideally below the outlined section we created in 3D earlier. Then make the Path active and paste your imagery into the area you require using the Edit> Paste Special>Paste Into command.

■ ADD AND REFINE THE DETAILS

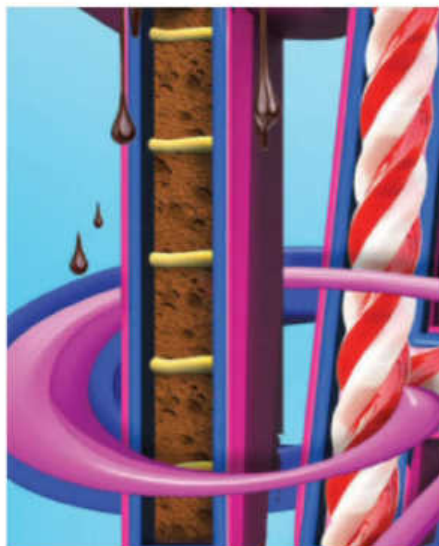
IT'S TIME TO MAKE THE TYPE REALLY TASTY

09 | MASK OFF LETTERS

This layer will now have a layer mask. Click on the mask in the Layers palette, and using the Brush tool, carefully remove sections of this mask by painting white on the mask. Think about allowing areas to break through, be visible and interact with the lines of the text to add interest and interaction. If you make a mistake simply Undo or alternatively paint black instead, which will stop that area being visible.



“Consider how details will interact with the filling: is the solution gloopy like honey or solid crumbs that bounce?”



11 | ADD DETAILS

Add details above this whole section: drops of chocolate, apples falling from the stack, drips and drops. Consider how these will interact with the filling: is the solution gloopy like honey or solid crumbs that bounce? Add as much or little as you feel is necessary without making the legibility suffer. Sometimes less is more in these cases.

10 | CONTINUE MASKING

Once you are happy with the area on one letter move on to the next. In your original sketch you should have thought about how these letters look and the colours of the fillings, for instance all browns, like

cake and chocolate, or mixed colour fillings. Have fun and create something that works for the look you are going for. Remember to allow sections of each layer to show through slightly to add interest.



001 | CAKE

A cake effect is applied to the letter T on the word tasty, and masked so that the T on type swirls around it

002 | SWEETS

The candy texture on the left-hand side of the letter A is duplicated onto its right arm to form the symmetrical arms of the letter.

003 | FRUITY TEXT

A strawberry texture is used on the letter S. The Clone tool can be used to extend the texture if it doesn't fill the entire letter



12 | GROUP, DUPLICATE AND MERGE

Combine all the layers together in a single folder and then duplicate it. Then select this folder and merge the layers using the command in the Layers palette. Next move this down the layer stack to above the background and, using the Edit> Transform>Perspective or Distort commands, make the reflection look either forward or backwards dependant on the look you require. Once you are happy with the look, reduce the opacity of the layer to a look that you think is best. You can also add a layer mask and fade it off if you require.



13 | ADD MORE DETAIL

Source some photography or take your own shots of some food-related items that add interest to the piece, for instance strawberries, and draw a Clipping Path using the Pen tool in the Tools menu. Then copy and paste these items either in front or behind the typography section. Add shadows either by hand on a separate layer below the item, turning the layer mode to Multiply and changing the opacity, or by using the automatic Drop Shadow facility in the Layer Styles palette.

FINAL TOUCHES

NOW ADD HIGHLIGHTS, MAKE THE COLOURS POP AND SHARPEN

14 STOP AND RE-EVALUATE

Have a brew, walk away from the design and take a break, you will have been staring at the screen for a while now and may have gotten too familiar with your artwork. Come back and take a new look at it. With fresh eyes you will spot any errors or glaring sections that don't work together more easily as you will now be looking at this as a whole. Now if you are happy, proceed, if not correct the individual areas or entire composition until it looks its best.



15 ADD THE GLINT

A glint is included in the files supplied with this tutorial on FileSilo. Simply paste the layer over the top of your design, position it where you think it should go, and then change the layer mode to Screen and the glint will be added. Adjust the opacity to customise the effect.

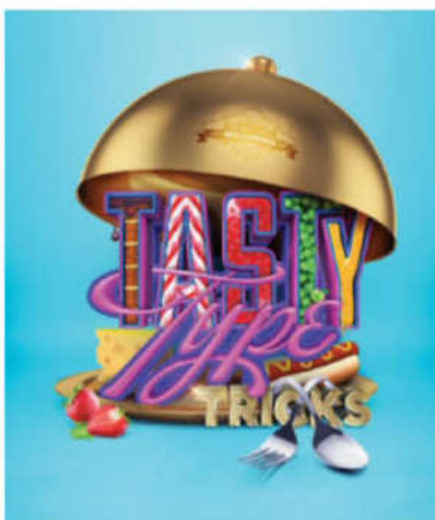


TASTY INSPIRATION

Food-based typography is a big trend at the moment and it offers you almost limitless possibilities depending on the message you want to convey and the foodstuff you use. Consider your choice of typeface wisely – for example, a font with long descenders will be good for an illustration based on the melting cheese and dripping sauces of a burger, while an illustration of fairycakes will suit a whimsical serif or cursive style. Consider font combinations and how they'll express your message, and the colour combinations that your chosen foodstuffs will provide – follow the same rules of good illustration you'd use in any other piece!

QUICK TIP: EXPERIMENT WITH ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Adjustment layers can really make parts of your image pop, but sometimes the overall effect isn't what's required. Adjustment layers come with a layer mask already built, so simply mask out the bits you don't want.

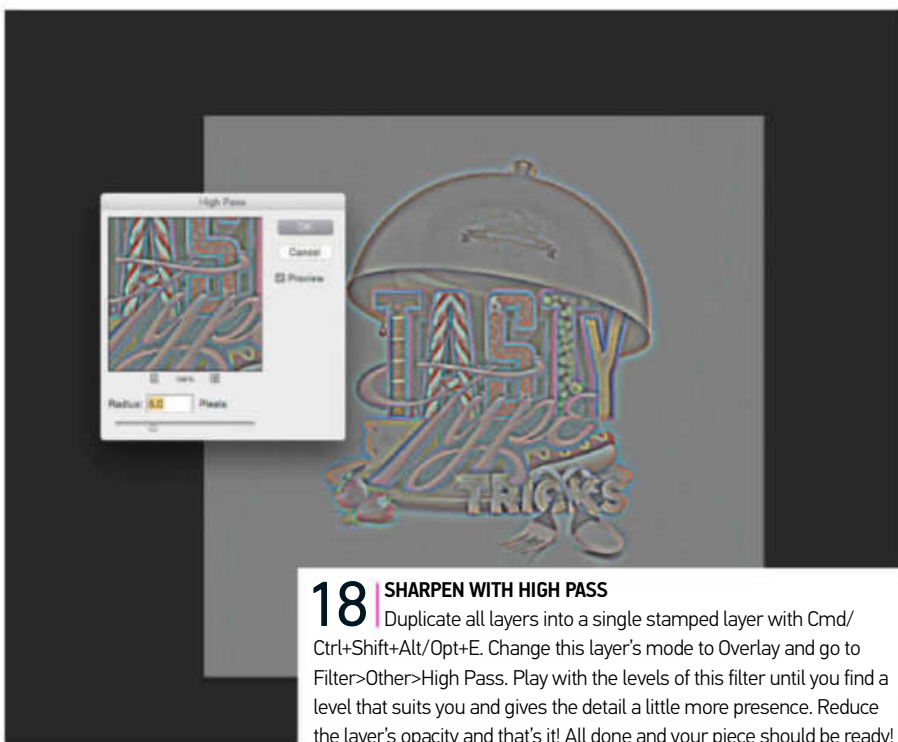


16 ADD HIGHLIGHTS

Add a layer at the very top of the layer stack, set the blending mode to Overlay and then simply paint white sections over the top of the image. The opacity of this layer will need to be reduced down to a level that suits the look you are after. Try to highlight areas to create more interest and create focal points to lead the eye around the design.

17 MAKE THE COLOURS POP

Adjust the colours now to make it pop. This, again, is down to personal judgement. Go to Layer>New adjustment layer and select Vibrance. Now adjust the sliders to get the balance you think looks right; this can be from less saturated to mega-saturated dependant on the feel you wish to achieve.



18 SHARPEN WITH HIGH PASS

Duplicate all layers into a single stamped layer with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Alt/Opt+E. Change this layer's mode to Overlay and go to Filter>Other>High Pass. Play with the levels of this filter until you find a level that suits you and gives the detail a little more presence. Reduce the layer's opacity and that's it! All done and your piece should be ready!

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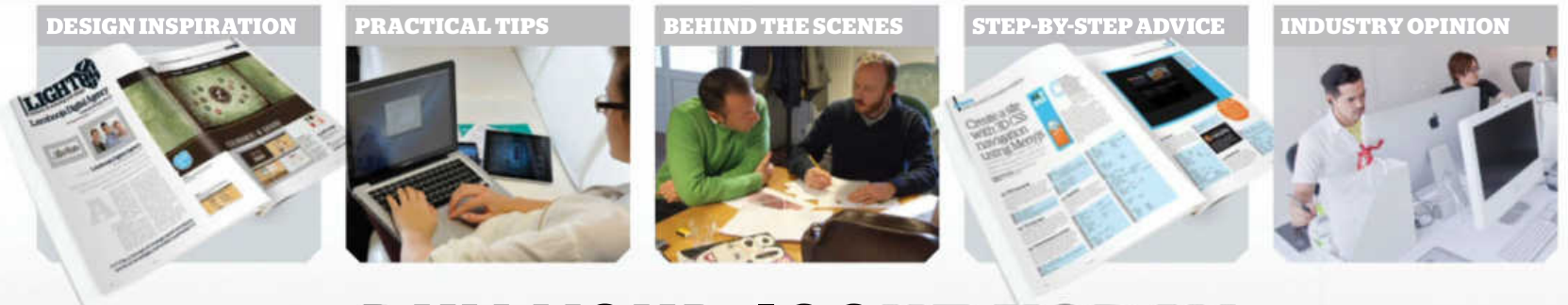


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“In the early stages I use countless layers, but eventually I will merge down to a single layer to work on”

Shannon



MERMAID'S WISH

SHANNON MAER

DISCOVER HOW SHANNON MAER MADE THIS ETHEREAL DIGITAL PAINTING

For US-based comics and cover artist Shannon Maer, "dedicating yourself to your passions is always an arduous journey. It is both rewarding and a difficult path to follow. The time and energy I invest in my art can feel overwhelming at times, but as for the experience of it, each image is a world that I get to live in during its creation."

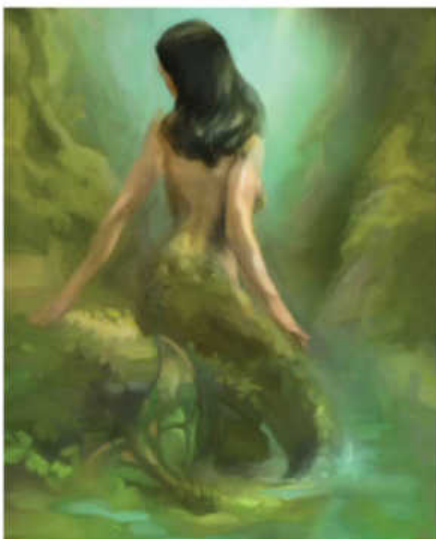
For this personal art piece, Mermaid's Wish, Maer was "exploring a more natural and organic feel in my work... And what better way to explore that than by attempting to capture the ethereal essence of a mermaid? For this very reason, you will see that throughout the process, I made several changes in pursuit of this goal." Photoshop is a fundamental

part of this iterative process, although Maer says "I like to approach the image with as much of a traditional method as possible. In the early stages I use countless layers, but eventually I will merge down to a single layer to work on. Retaining separate masks and alpha channels however, is a powerful asset that Photoshop excels in."



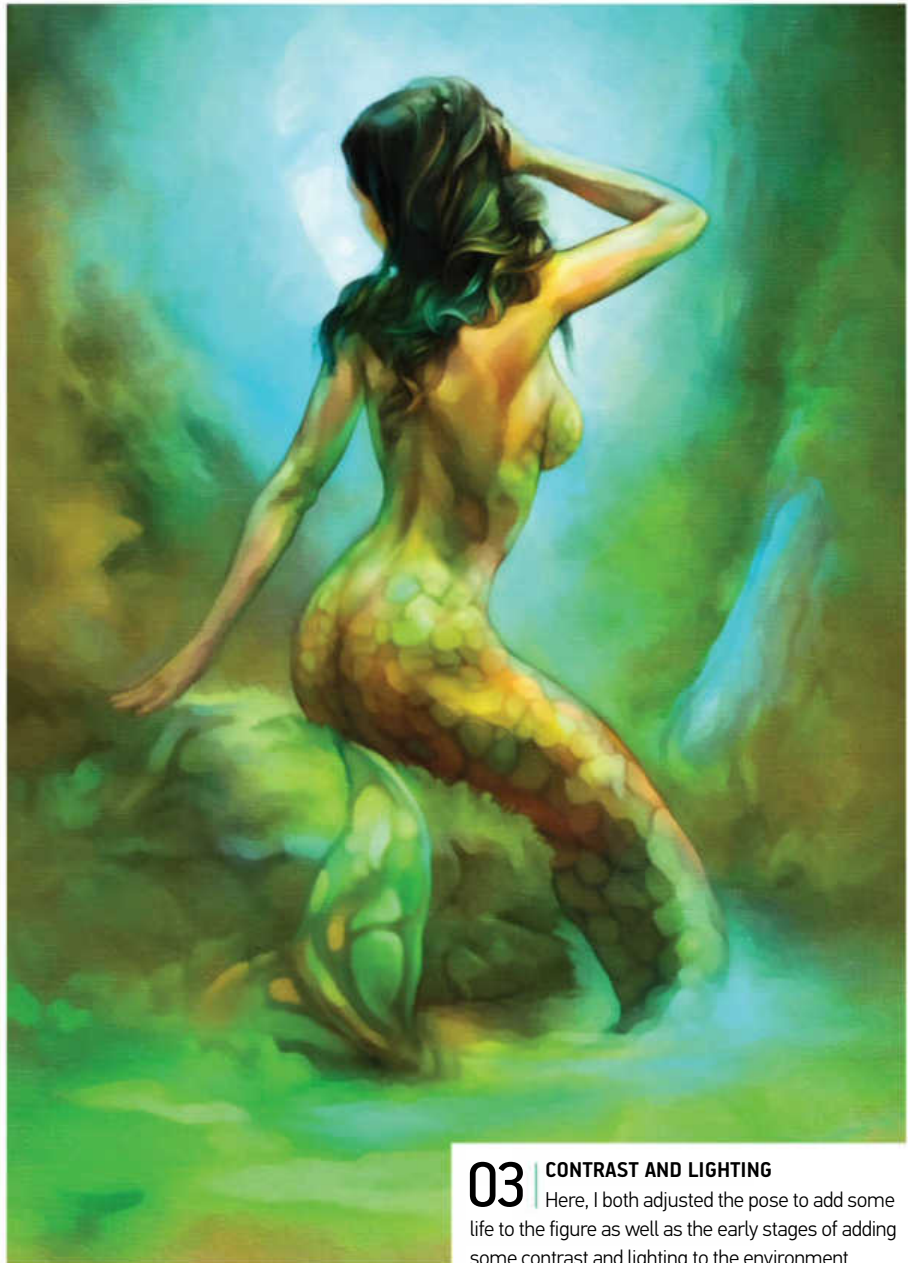
01 INITIAL SKETCH

Getting an overall feel for the direction of a piece is vital at an early stage. Limiting it to black and white helps me to focus on the image in a purely graphic manner.



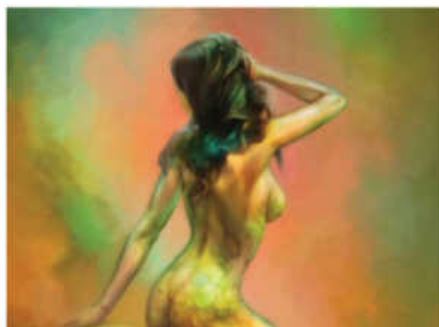
02 UNDERPAINTING

Laying down a base for all the colours as well as the basic shading, sets a tone before all the heavy lifting goes into detailing.

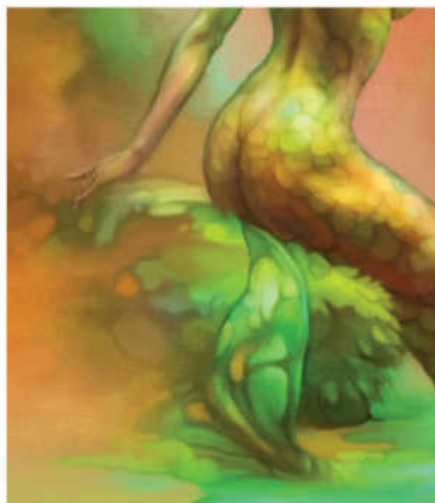


03 CONTRAST AND LIGHTING

Here, I both adjusted the pose to add some life to the figure as well as the early stages of adding some contrast and lighting to the environment.



04 | ADDING ATMOSPHERE
With the base already laid in, I could see that a warmer tone for the atmosphere would both complement and draw your attention, while still retaining a separation from the background.



05 | UNIFYING THE COLOUR
In order to solidify the picture as a whole, it is important to maintain a unified colour palette throughout the entire image. Here I brought much of the background colours into the foreground elements as well.



06 | REVISE THE COMPOSITION
I wanted the mermaid to feel more inviting and open to the viewer. Here I feel the image took a step forward and became more interesting.



WORK WITH REFERENCES
3D MODELS MAKE A GREAT POSE REFERENCE
It is vital to lay down a design foundation, prior to getting carried away with detail work. I like to begin with small thumbnail sketches. This gives me a good idea of how strong a composition is. At this point I began matching my pose in DAZ Studio in order to generate my base reference. From here I went back into Photoshop to rough out my line work and begin to block in my colours.



07 | DETAILING
With the revised posed in place, the same colouring and lighting needed to be matched. The warm glow of the environment lighting is beginning to take shape.



08 | DYNAMIC CHANGES
You might hesitate to make a significant change to your work because of all the time that you've invested, but often these choices are what brings your characters to life.



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20 EXPERT TIPS FOR VECTORS



© Ladislav Chachignot 2015

DISCOVER PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS' SECRETS FOR WORKING WITH VECTORS, INCLUDING HOW TO CREATE VECTORS IN PHOTOSHOP AS WELL AS BLENDING VECTOR AND PIXEL-BASED ELEMENTS SEAMLESSLY



01. LEARN THE DIFFERENCE: VECTOR VS RASTER

It's important to note the difference between raster and vector artwork. Raster images are made of pixels, which are tiny squares that sit together to form an image. These are resolution-dependent and if you enlarge a raster image, you will start to pixelate the image.

Vectors are geometric shapes that are created by mathematical lines and curves, and they are not resolution-dependent, meaning that you can enlarge them as much as you like without losing quality or form.

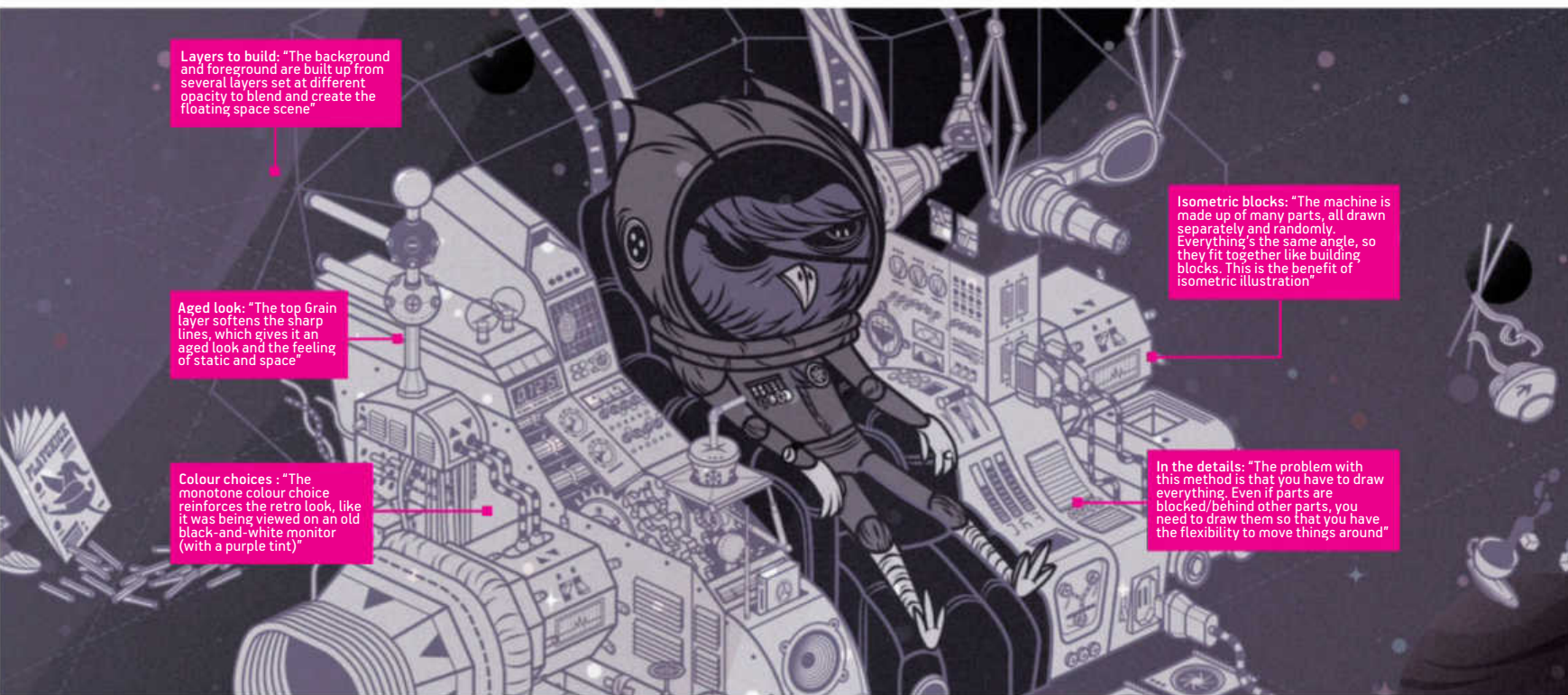
Photoshop is raster-based, but it can handle vectors. Especially in the most recent versions, it has its own vector tools to create shapes and type, which can easily be filled with colours or patterns directly from the toolbar and using the Live Shape Properties in CC. However, you may need to rasterise these vectors to apply some Photoshop effects, which only work on pixels. Illustrator is vector-based and its main purpose is to create complex geometric designs. The two programs work together exceptionally, meaning you can blend the best of both worlds.

Most of the artists featured here will work between the two programs, for example designer and illustrator Ladislav Chachignot (www.ladislavdesign.com) explains, "For this portrait [on the page opposite] I've created some coloured shapes in Illustrator, then I've imported them into Photoshop. I can still change the size and they will remain perfect. If I want to change something in the vector shape, I go back to Illustrator, modify it and re-import it in Photoshop. When you bring the two pieces of software together, you will have a new source of possibility and freedom."

02. BUILD A SUCCESSFUL ILLUSTRATION

ILLUSTRATOR AND DESIGNER STEPHEN CHAN (WWW.STEPHEN-CHAN.CO.UK) SHOWS US HOW HE USES TECHNIQUE, COLOUR AND EFFECTS TO BUILD A STRIKING VECTOR ILLUSTRATION

© Stephen Chan



03. BLEND PIXELS AND VECTORS

Combining the crispness of vector with the tangibility of digital painting and making a cohesive design is no easy task. It is the signature style of French illustrator and designer Ladislav Chachignot (www.ladislavdesign.com), who combines the best of both Illustrator and Photoshop: "I'm attracted to two things in art: digital painting in Photoshop and vector art in Illustrator. I couldn't choose between them, so I decided to mix them and take the best aspects [of] each. I use Photoshop for its amazing brushes and to draw [or] paint directly in the software. I use a lot [of] clipping masks, as it's easy to add texture without paying too much attention to the outlines. I use Illustrator to create a contrast between

textured, digital painting and flat vector elements. I import these vector elements and sort them using separate layers in Photoshop. I often use Photoshop to give depth to my images and vector elements by adding a Gaussian Blur under the shapes. I mix Photoshop and Illustrator to give the images a modern and geometric look that would not be possible to do easily only with Photoshop. My artworks have a bit of the vector art look, but Photoshop allows me to overpass this and give the image something more interesting. I think my goal and graphic identity is to mix a painterly style with some flat geometric shapes, as shown in my image here." You can see an overview of this process step by step in Tip 4.

© Ladislav Chachignot 2015



04. COMBINE DIGITAL PAINTING WITH VECTORS

LADISLAS CHACHIGNOT (WWW.BEHANCE.NET/LADISLAS) BREAKS DOWN ONE OF HIS STANDOUT DESIGNS TO TALK US THROUGH HIS METHOD STEP BY STEP



01 | DESIGN THE VECTOR ELEMENTS

"I create my design in Illustrator, as it's easier for me to build complex geometric shapes. I use rotation or symmetry to create my design and keep the layers simple. As many shapes are grouped in a few layers, it's [easier] to manage and import in Photoshop."



03 | CREATE A TEXTURED BACKGROUND

"Here, I'm adding textures comprised of photos and also adding some light effects to the eyes of the bat using soft brushes, with the layer blending mode set to Lighten. My goal is to [contrast] the clean aspect of the Illustrator shapes, with some textures and brushstrokes using Photoshop."



02 | PHOTOSHOP TEXTURE EFFECT

"I isolate my vector shape and paste it into a new file. I use Image>Mode>Grayscale and add contrast, then Image>Mode>Bitmap (300 Pixels/Inch, Method: Halftone Screen). On the next screen, I use Frequency: 15-30, Angle: 45° and Shape: Round. I paste my halftone on my colour design and play with layer blending modes, like Multiply."



© Ladislav Chachignot 2015

05. WORK BETWEEN ILLUSTRATOR AND PHOTOSHOP

If you have Creative Cloud, then you have access to both Illustrator and Photoshop. In the latest versions, the two programs work together seamlessly and they have also closed the learning gap, by ensuring that if you know one program, you can pick up the other due to similar interfaces and tools. We recommend that if you're unsure with Illustrator, you spend some time getting to know it, as it can be used to enhance your Photoshop work. "Photoshop is the perfect companion to Illustrator," says freelance designer and illustrator Michael Lester (www.michaelwilliamlester.com). "From a technical point of view, it allows you to get your illustrations print and web ready, while from an artistic point of view it gives you the ability to explore



hand-finished touches while retaining the edibility of your vectors. Vector Smart Objects in Photoshop are integral to my workflow allowing me to edit my individual vectors in Illustrator while preserving the composition in Photoshop."

06. DESIGN A WEBSITE WITH VECTOR ELEMENTS

ADRIÁN GARCÍA, AKA OWI SIXSEVEN (WWW.SIXSEVEN.ES), EXPLAINS HOW HE BUILDS HIS WEB AND UI DESIGNS, PROVING THAT VECTORS ARE NOT JUST FOR ILLUSTRATION WORK



Basic shape tools: "Usually, to create an entire UI or website, I work with basic geometric shapes in Photoshop (squares, circles, triangles) and will modify them according to my idea. When it comes to more complex shapes, the Pen tool also helps to draw such lines, but [at this point] I usually come into Illustrator and [design] the iconography of the site and combine it with Photoshop elements. These two tools complement each other perfectly."



Consider navigation: A website interface needs to be navigable, which is important to keep in mind when designing the different elements of your layout. "I often combine colours in user interface elements, as this can greatly help identify the user's navigation. Using a simple rhombus, this screen is where the user can navigate around the interactive map. All these elements and forms were created in Photoshop, and the icons are created within Illustrator."



Keep it clean: It is easy to overpower designs with too many vector elements, but this can make it harder to get around a website. "It is also important to design a clean interface without distractions. My style is usually minimal, so I use spot colour combined with fine lines [to achieve this]. In this screenshot, you can see the silhouette of the user, created with a simple layout in Photoshop."



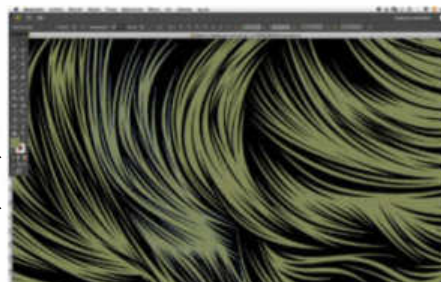
Think about structure: Some pages in your design will have to strike a balance between the visuals and text, without breaking the continuity that you have already established. "When you generate the pages with more text, also design a number of vector UI elements to contain the paragraphs. To each of these [elements], I add a style that balances between colour and thickness, and I will re-use these in other screens. This is important to maintain a homogeneous structure."

© Owi Sixseven

07. BUILD VECTOR ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOS

Vector designs don't always have to start from scratch. By using photography, you have a guide to work from to build up vector elements for an effective illustration. This is a method that Alejandro Garcia of CranioDsgn (www.craniodsgn.es) often employs: "My artwork is always created from high-resolution images to achieve a greater level of detail in the final artwork. They can be personal photographs, from photographers or supplied by customers. I also work on my illustrations from collages or compositions prepared by myself and used as the basis for my work."

Once the source material is in place, it is time to start the process of building a vector design using the guide created. While Garcia switches between Illustrator and Photoshop to create his design, the same method can be applied in Photoshop solely, using the Pen tool to painstakingly trace over all of the elements of the source photograph: "Usually I only use the Pen tool. I know that this may seem laborious work, but it allows me control over the entire process of creating the artwork." This takes a good knowledge of the Pen tool and how to use it accurately to be able to build up the small areas of detail. When this is done purely in Photoshop, it is often referred to as a vixel – combining vector tools and pixel elements.



© CranioDsgn. All rights reserved

Once the vector design has been built up, Garcia finishes the look of the illustration using Photoshop textures: "When I've finished 'vectorising' the illustration, I apply a texture that I have generated previously in Photoshop in order to give the vector illustration a warmer aspect, because without this texture [the whole illustration] may seem colder."



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08. MAKE AND USE BESPOKE TEXTURES

We've already looked at using Photoshop to create and apply textures to your vector artwork to make it pop, but there are more ways of creating textures than using photos. Vector illustrator and graphic designer Alejandro Garcia uses bespoke noise textures and layer blending modes: "I create textures by desaturating an image and forcing the levels of black and white to break the image. After removing the white areas with a Selection tool, such as the Magic Wand, [I create] a personal noise texture. Photoshop's Linear Burn blending mode helps me to integrate textures that have previously generated [into my illustrations]. I also use layer effects, such as Color Overlay, applying it to one of the textures I'm using, and the Drop Shadow effect in a very subtle way, with a percentage of Noise between 20% and 34%. Finally, I use Curves/Levels adjustment layers to control the shades and intensities of colour."



© Michael William Lester

09. CREATE A VECTOR-BASED UI

WEBSITE AND USER INTERFACES OFTEN USES VECTOR ELEMENTS FOR NAVIGATION AND LAYOUT, AS ADRIÁN GARCÍA EXPLAINS



Photoshop shapes: "All the basic elements shown here have been created using the basic geometric shapes built into Photoshop"

Mobile design: "In the mobile (version of the) design, I also used geometric shapes within the user navigation, modifying them for use on a touch device"

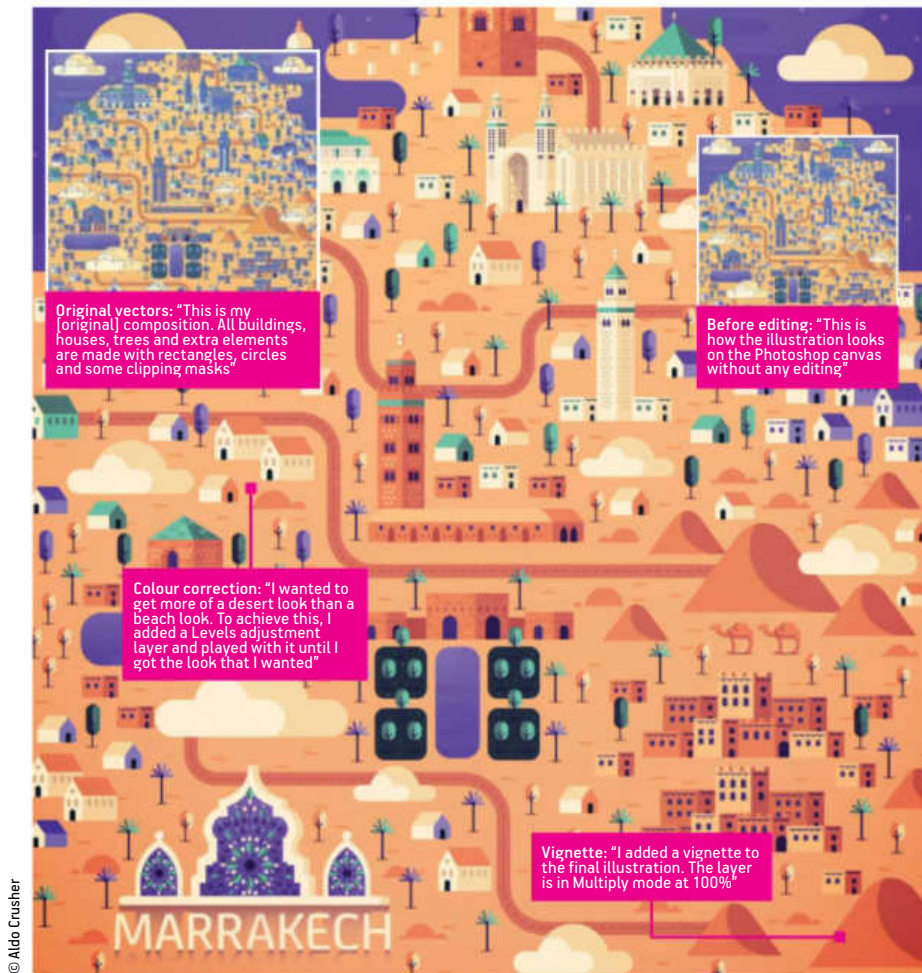
Menu bar: "The main menu consists of several UI elements focused on user navigation, always shown in an easy and accessible way"

Central focus: "In the central area, is the main viewing experience. This was created through the animation of vector elements, created with the Pen tool"

© Adrián García

10. ADD TEXTURES IN PHOTOSHOP

One of the joys of using Photoshop over Illustrator is the program's ability to add textures to vectors to break the clean lines and give them a bit of depth and feeling. Freelance designer and illustrator Michael Lester says that this is one of his favourite processes: "Before you open up Photoshop, you have to go through a process of choosing your textures. There are a lot of downloadable texture libraries (free and paid) out there, but they will never beat your own custom textures. Take a look around your room and you'll find endless possibilities. In the past I've scanned notebook covers, wallets, sandpaper and even a basketball. Make a single PSD file with all the textures to choose from and start dropping them over your Vector Smart Objects, playing with the blending modes. Before you know it you'll have your own extensive custom texture library, full of new (and possibly slightly strange) ways to give your vectors some highly unique character."



© Aldo Crusher

11. ADD SPECIAL EFFECTS TO VECTORS

Motion graphic designer and illustrator Aldo Crusher (www.behance.net/aldocrusher) creates mostly vector-based artwork. "First I make all the primary shapes... I use the Shape tools, like the circle or the rectangle, and to make more complex shapes, I use Paths or the Pen tool. Once I have the element traced, I paste it into a new canvas. I use Photoshop to get two different final results: colour correction, vignettes and glows; and/or to achieve a handmade look with brushes and tool presets. For colour

correction, I use a Levels adjustment layer. To make a vignette, I duplicate the main layer, rasterise it and set it to Multiply blending mode. [On this layer] I erase the centre [of the image] with the Eraser tool. For glowing elements, I duplicate the layer, apply a Gaussian Blur and put it in Screen or Linear Dodge blending mode. [For my handmade look], I re-trace the basic shapes with chalk brushes to get irregular edges. I add texture by modifying the flow of the brush; I like to play with it reducing its percentage."



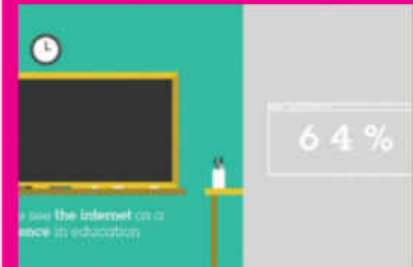
Brand: PuroCorazón Handbags and Accessories
Creative Direction: Carolina Restrepo
Graphic Design: Carolina Díaz
Photography: Alejandra Devescovi and Leslie Spak
Makeup: Luis Salcedo
Styling: Lia Lázaro
Model: Mapple Sam

12. BUILD BALANCED COMPOSITIONS

If you're creating vector designs that need to work around a photographic central element, then you need to ensure that there is balance between the different media. "When mediating photography with vectors, I recommend pasting the photograph and designing the vectors based on it. That way, you can assure an equilibrated composition between the elements of the photograph and the new vector ones. Also, using the same colour palette in both will help blend them together later," says Carolina Díaz. You also need to think about the purpose of the photography to ensure that this is not lost when you are working on the illustrated elements. "In this case, the purpose was to accentuate the product. For this reason, the backgrounds that surround them are lighter in opacity than the ones in the corners, making the handbag and the model the main elements of the composition. Accordingly, blending the photograph not only with vectors, but also with other image textures and illustrations, will create a more sticking design."

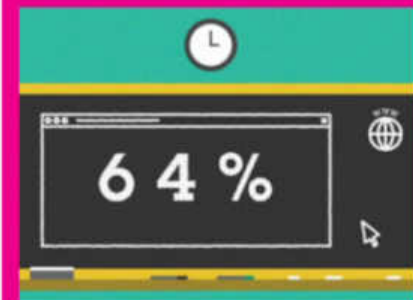
13. CREATE EDITORIAL DESIGNS

MICHAEL LESTER TALKS US THROUGH HIS PROCESS FOR DESIGNING CRISP VECTOR ILLUSTRATIONS FOR COMMERCIAL USE



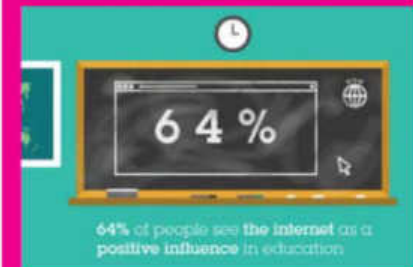
01 | BUILD THE VECTORS

"I start by building the vectors in Illustrator, working to a rough format so I can play with the cropping later. I split the elements up depending on how complex the illustration is and how many elements I want to be able to individually work on in Photoshop."



02 | VECTOR SMART OBJECTS

"I then import these objects as individual Vector Smart Objects with a simple copy and paste from Illustrator to Photoshop before rebuilding the illustration. At this point I'll play with the composition and scale, not having to worry about resolution problems when enlarging the vectors."



03 | ADD THE EFFECTS

"This is where the fun starts. I begin to add texture to the blackboard, a perfect example of how well these two programs work together. Brushing away at a layer mask creates a nice chalk effect, which remains unaffected when I edit the vector file in Illustrator."

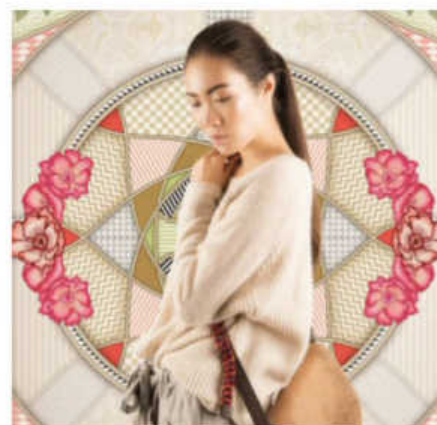
© Michael William Lester

14. BLEND PHOTOS WITH VECTOR BACKGROUNDS

Carolina Díaz (www.carolinadiaz.com.co) creates fashion illustrations that use professional photography and vector backgrounds for commercial advertising designs. This is a great technique that you can use on your own portraits to turn them into effective artwork: "To blend the vectors with the backgrounds of the photography, I use the Multiply blending mode. That way, the vectors adjust to the shadows, colours, and textures of the photograph. I also adjust the Opacity of each layer. The darker layers are going to look closer, while the lighter ones appear further away. To intensify this effect, I add Inner or Outer Glows in the blending options of each layer. Adding this is not only going to create different levels, but give volume and depth to each element. I separate the silhouette from the photography by adding a vector mask to a duplicated layer of the photography layer, and erasing the



background with the Brush tool. Working over the vector mask, and with black as a foreground colour, I can erase the background by painting over it, or use a white foreground colour if I want to uncover something. This is easier than using the regular eraser, because you can cover or uncover the elements any time you want, without permanently erasing them."



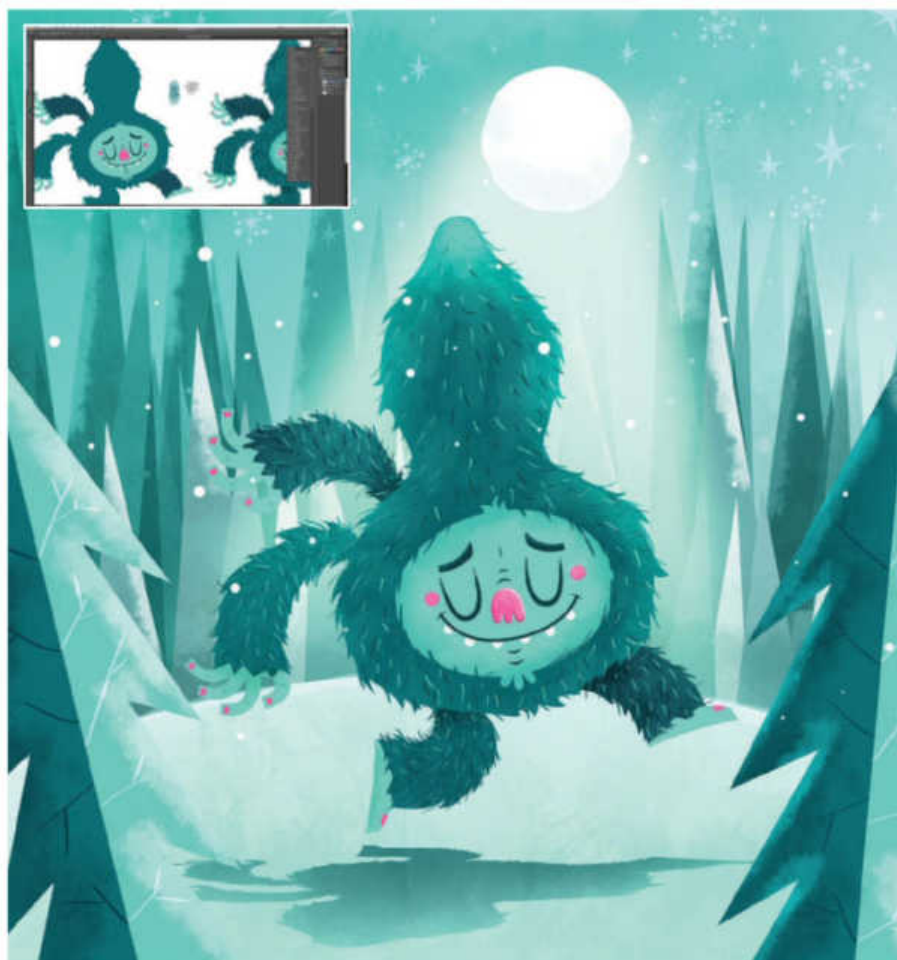
Brand: PuroCorazón Handbags and Accessories
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Photography: Alejandra Devescovi and Leslie Spak
Makeup: Luis Salcedo
Styling: Lia Lázaro
Model: Mapple Sam

15. DEVELOP ILLUSTRATIONS IN PHOTOSHOP

Graphic and textile designer Carolina Díaz creates her striking fashion artwork by importing vectors and shapes individually into Photoshop: "I bring each element in separately or in a small group of elements with the purpose of each one being on a different layer. This way, it is easier to treat each vector. I add textures to the vectors and blend them together with the Multiply blending mode. I adjust the opacity depending on how saturated I want the texture to look. I also add images into the blank spaces created by the vectors, which include geometrical or arabesque patterns. I add other illustrations made in Photoshop, which are mostly images mediated with the Brush tool. Finally... I add Inner or Outer Glows [for] depth."



16. TREAT VECTORS WITH THE CHALK BRUSH

Vectors can sometimes look too crisp and clean for your needs. Photoshop's tools enable you to give a more handmade look and feel. For Aldo Crusher, he achieves this using the Brush tool: "I like to use the Chalk and Ink brushes for a handmade, fun look that's full of textures. I start by re-tracing the vector shapes [that I have made] with a Chalk brush. I like

the irregularity it gives to the edges. The vector shapes work as a guide for me. I then use the same brush with less Flow to achieve some texture. I apply these textures into two new layers: one in Multiply and the other in Screen or Color Dodge. To finish the illustration I add a little bit of noise with the Noise filter."

© Aldo Crusher



© Stephen Chan / Coke Asia

17. ADD AGED EFFECTS TO ILLUSTRATIONS

Even though vector illustrations are quite clean when they are first created, you can still add a retro, aged look with various effects in Photoshop, which can produce a wonderful contrast in styles. This is something that Stephen Chan applies to his vector work: "To achieve the aged effect, I used scans of old papers, converted to black and white, set to Multiply at a medium opacity. I duplicated the original illustration twice and applied Filter Gallery> Texture>Grain using the Regular Grain

setting and applied Filter Gallery>Texture>Texturizer using the Canvas setting. I set both of these layers to Multiply and start decreasing the Opacity slowly until you feel that it looks right (usually around 30-40% for a really subtle look). I felt that my colours started to look a bit dull, so I added a bright orange Color Fill layer just above the original. I also added a Hue/Saturation layer and a Levels layer to really make the colours pop and look more balanced."

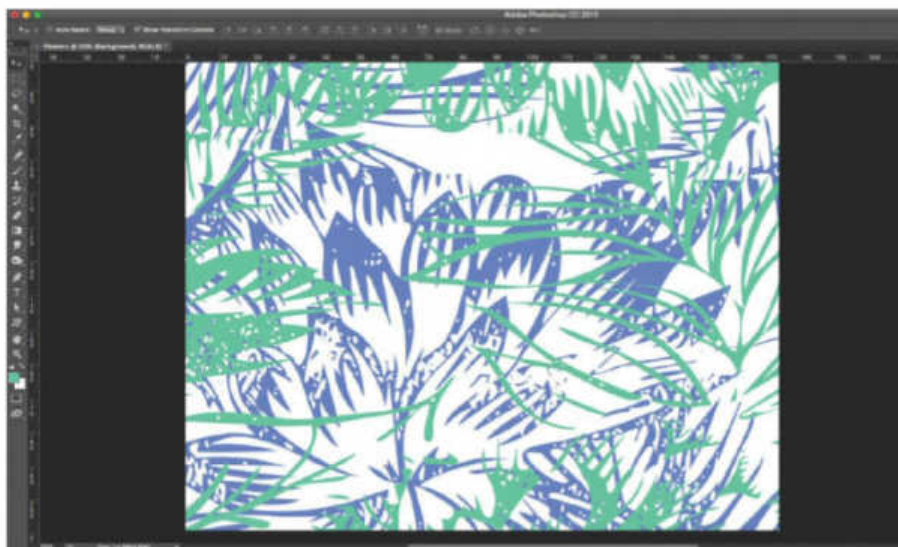


© Sam Moore 2015

18. PICK THE RIGHT PROGRAM

Throughout this feature we have explored the different ways of using both Photoshop and Illustrator to create striking vector-based artworks. However, the key is in knowing which program to use and when, rather than throwing everything at a piece of design. Before you begin a new work, plan the final look and feel, as this will dictate what is the right method to follow for your work. "The process I use to create my illustrations varies from one piece to another. I will use either Photoshop or Illustrator more heavily on a specific piece, depending on the intended overall outcome desired," agrees digital artist Sam Moore of Moore Than Design (www.smooreart.com). "For

example, if I want the illustration to have a looser and more natural feel I will use Photoshop almost entirely, as the options for layering and texture control are far greater and more useful than in Illustrator. However, if the end product is going to be sharper or geometric based, I will use Illustrator for the majority of the illustration, only bringing the work into Photoshop for the final touchups. You can create a very dynamic illustration by using Photoshop and Illustrator together, if you use each program for what it is best at. I find that Illustrator is best suited for complex vector, gradient and 3D work. Photoshop, on the other hand, excels at layering, textures and finishing adjustments."



19. CAPTURE VECTORS ON THE GO

For working on vector illustrations in Photoshop, the Adobe Shapes CC app is incredibly useful. It cuts out a lot of work in creating custom vectors. Whereas you might usually take a photograph, import it into Photoshop and use the Pen tool to trace over it to create a Path and save it as a custom shape, the app turns your photos of objects directly into vector graphics.

To use Shapes CC, you simply open the app (and sign into your Adobe ID). You then use the

iPad's camera to take a photo of an object. There is a slider that you can use to change the amount of detail that you want to include. You can also choose to display the image as a shape on a dark or light background. Take your photo, confirm it and the app will begin to draw your shape. Hit Save and name your shape to add it to your CC library.

In Photoshop, open the Libraries panel and find your new graphic. You can drag it directly into your canvas and use it as a graphic (it imports as a



Smart Object). However, if you want full access to the Live Shape Properties, you can convert it to a custom shape. Cmd/Ctrl-click on the layer's thumbnail to create a selection, then go to the Paths palette. Click on the Make Work Path From Selection icon to create a path for your shape. Next go to Edit>Define Custom Shape. This will create the shape that you can then use as you wish, with the Fill and Stroke options active.



© Sam Moore 2015

20. ESTABLISH A VECTOR WORKFLOW

When working on a project that involves both vector and raster elements, you need to have a system that works for you to ensure the best quality of artwork, says Sam Moore. "I always fully complete the vector work first, otherwise it is very easy for me to waste time redoing raster work that was flattened or merged with an incomplete vector. That is not to say you should avoid experimenting, but there must be a time for doing and a time for trying new things. Reaching a successful end product is the most important goal; figuring out how you best arrive at that place is an important part of it.

"My personal workflow is as follows: sketch idea quickly, refine sketch, create vector lines or shapes, fill lines or shapes with desired gradient or colour, finalise vector work by splitting into useful layers or groups, import Vector Smart Objects to Photoshop, Layer Brush tool and textures, finalise with touchups and adjustments. Vector work is easy to get lost in, but a reliable process will result in a better Photoshop and Illustrator experience."



Portable: The Companion 2 doesn't need to be connected to a computer

WACOM CINTIQ COMPANION 2

WE PUT WACOM'S NEW COMPUTER TABLET THROUGH ITS PACES TO SEE IF IT'S AS GOOD AS OTHER TABLETS ON THE MARKET, AND IF IT'S A TRUE COMPANION TO YOUR DRAWING EXPERIENCE

www.wacom.com

SPECIFICATIONS:

- OS: Windows 8 (can be connected to either Mac or PC)

From £1,200
\$2,000

Tablets have evolved, technology's rapidly caught up with real media over the last couple of decades, and digital artists are getting closer and closer to the feel of actually drawing with a pen and paper. At first we had pens to replace your mouse and draw onto pads, and then came fully-fledged drawing tablets, which exploded with the global popularity of iPads.

Every year though, drawing tablets get bigger, better, sleeker and in some cases even better than the real thing. The Wacom Cintiq Companion 2 is the latest in a long line of these super-tablets, and more obviously perhaps, it's the second of the Companion series, the powerful yet lap-sized

drawing machines that best suit artists at home. Because instead of being a tablet you can connect to your computer and draw with, it is the computer; it comes with Windows 8 installed, and doubles up as a laptop.

The immediate impression that the Companion 2 gives is a good one; the size makes it great for on-the-go drawing and the sheer power of the Companion is certainly good enough for the office. It's refreshing to see a tablet so perfect for casual use, while you're watching television, for example. But the size and look of the Companion are just the start, it's only when you delve deeper that the tablet really starts to impress.

Portability: The Cintiq Companion 2 is a fully functioning tablet computer as well as a high-end graphics tablet, so you can work in professional resolutions and apps while on the move

Hotkeys: The hotkeys on the side of the screen are functional and customisable

Touchscreen: Control the touchscreen with your fingertips like you would with any other tablet device or use the Pro Pen for accurate drawing capabilities when working on your artwork

Adjustable support: A support that offers three levels of elevation for ultimate comfort and adaptable drawing





Pro Pen: The Pro Pen has fantastic functionality, and comes with extra nibs



Connectability: The Companion 2's array of ports

“Wacom products are almost unrivalled in terms of drawing experience, and the Companion is up with the best of them”

Because of the laptop-like nature of the Companion 2, it's easy to set up and get started, provided you set up a Windows account. Calibrating the Pen with the screen is easy too, and holding down the pen will reveal a ring around the pixels you're touching.

You can either control the Companion 2 with the Pen or with your finger – or another Wacom stylus designed for touchscreens, such as the Bamboo – which certainly makes typing easier. The keyboard can be revealed from the bottom of the screen and can be split into two sides or one regular, long keyboard. The big disadvantage of this is that unlike the big Cintiqs, putting your hand on the screen can confuse the device, but that's only a

slight drawback and doesn't take away from the actual drawing process.

The most exciting thing about owning a Companion is that you can simply sketch the base of your drawings into Photoshop first, rather than using a pencil and some paper. The smoothness of the tablet is superb; there's a slight cushion between the pen touching the device and being lifted about a centimetre from the screen, perfect for creating flicks and flourishes, and the Pen really glides across the surface with immaculate control.

Wacom products are almost unrivalled in terms of drawing experience, and the Companion is up with the best of them. It's considered as standard for this kind of precision, but what about the other features?



Hotkeys: Convenient and customisable controls

■ THREE WACOM PRODUCTS TO USE WITH THE COMPANION



PRO PEN £72/\$80

The Cintiq Companion 2 already comes with a Pro Pen, one of Wacom's best drawing styluses, and the perfect option for the Companion. The pen is a comfortable weight and includes right-click buttons on the side; there are extra nibs included, and it comes in its own box too, so you won't lose it.



SMUDGEGUARD GLOVE £14/\$15

Use the Wacom Smudgeguard glove while you're resting your drawing hand on the tablet, and you won't confuse the tablet with your hand and your stylus being on the same screen. This is a glove that suits any kind of device, though it's probably not the most fashionable Wacom product on the market.



BAMBOO STYLUS SOLO £17/\$19

If you want to use the Companion as a laptop as much as a drawing device, why not invest in a stylus specifically for that? The Pro Pen works too, but the Bamboo stylus has a softer touch. In fact, it's perfect for any device, including your phone or tablet.



Protection: The tablet comes with a high-quality case to protect it on-the-go. The pen also has its own box



Extra support: The Companion 2 comes with an adjustable support that offers three levels of elevation

On top of the amazing pen control on the Companion, there are controls to the left-hand side of the screen, which make it even easier to control the functions of Photoshop; this makes it a device also suited to composite creators, and you can even leave boxes of commands on display while you work. The Companion has all the necessary ports too, including headphones, USB and charging, and the power switch is a pull-and-hold kind of button, which makes it impossible to accidentally knock.

And on top of all of these fantastic features, the screen is absolutely perfect and pristine for working on. The colour is superb, there's a 4K resolution of 2560 x 1440, and the 13-inch screen is big enough to work with, but not so huge that you'll have to keep it on a desk. It's compatible with a Mac – so you can plug it in and use it the same way as the biggest Cintiq models – and it even has a built-in speakers and camera set.

The Cintiq Companion 2 is just about the most advanced computer tablet of its kind. Ultimately it's the drawing features that you'll probably buy it for, the 2048 levels of pen pressure, tilt and multi-touch features, but as an all-round Windows tablet, it's also superb: the processor within the machine makes it a great choice of computer alone. But the beauty of the Companion is that it's not limited just to artists or even just to professionals. It's beautiful, it's powerful, but it's also versatile.

VERDICT

Features: **10/10**
Ease of use: **8/10**
Quality of results: **10/10**
Value for money: **9/10**

FINAL SCORE: 9/10

ARTIST Q&A

ILLUSTRATOR AND ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP DESIGNER REBEKKA HEARL EXPLAINS WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT THE CINTIQ COMPANION 2



WHY DO YOU FIND USING THE COMPANION SO MUCH EASIER THAN OTHER TABLETS, REBEKKA?

The Companion makes the drawing process much easier because I can directly look at where my hand is when I'm drawing. It's also great for sketching on the go.

WHY WOULD YOU FAVOUR THE COMPANION OVER BIGGER CINTIQ MODELS?

The portability is a major plus. Artists shouldn't be put off by its small size; it still offers the same functionality as the bigger, stationery models. You can't curl up on the sofa and draw with a 27QHD!

HOW USER-FRIENDLY ARE THE HOTKEYS ON SIDE OF THE TABLET?

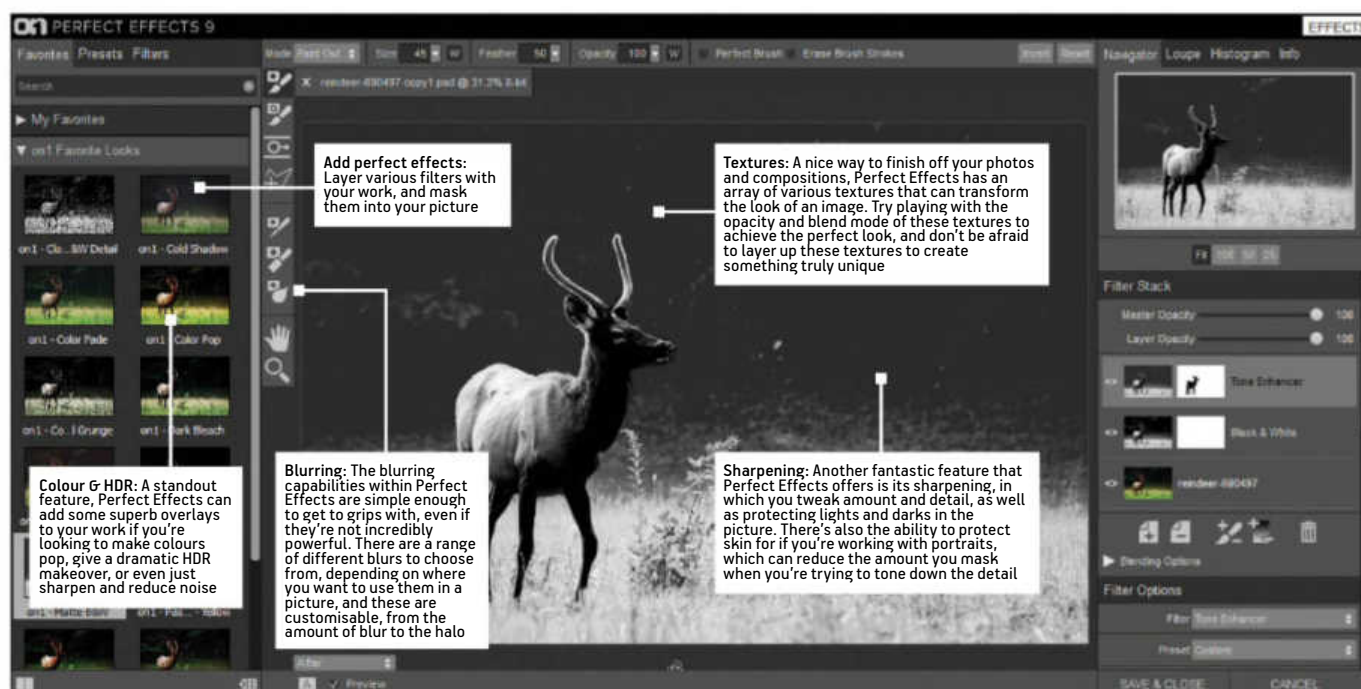
They're not as sensitive as the ExpressKey Remote; it's good to know I can use these convenient hotkeys, and rebind them as and when I need to, without accidentally setting off the zoom.

JUST HOW CLOSE IS THE COMPANION TO THE FEEL OF A REAL PEN AND PAPER?

There is a slight space between the cursor and the nib of the pen when pressed against the screen; it takes a little getting used to, but once you get into the flow of drawing, you'll forget all about it.

ONONE PERFECT EFFECTS 9

DOES PERFECT EFFECTS 9 UNLOCK GREAT PHOTO-EDITING POTENTIAL, OR IS IT JUST A LIMITED PLUG-IN?



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PLATFORMS:

• Windows/Mac

FREE

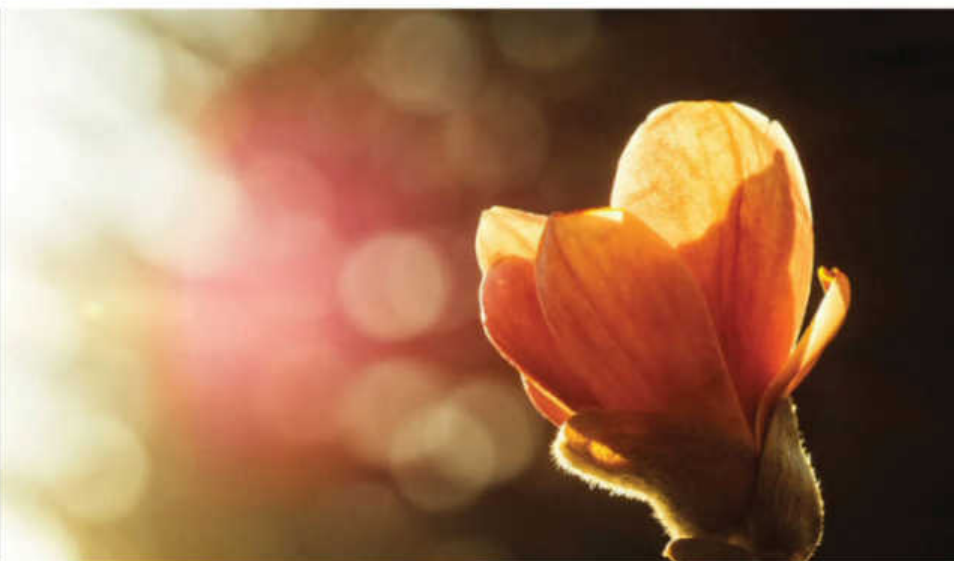
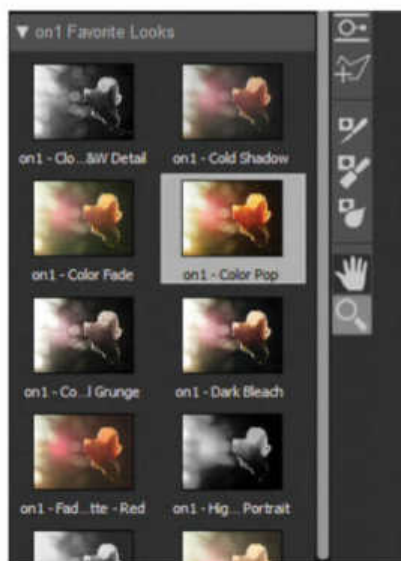
There are programs out there that really test the limits of what you can achieve with a little photo editing. Software companies around the world, some renowned, some less so, have

tried to crack the market and rival Photoshop by becoming more user-friendly or more advanced as well as trying to be more stylish or offer more desirable presets. Few can match the sophistication of Adobe, but that's not to say you can't discover some stunning effects for your photos by digging around the competition.

OnOne are just one company that have released a successful series of apps, and they've done so in a different way to many others. OnOne's latest offering to photo editors, Perfect Effects 9, isn't an attempt to knock Adobe's products off their perch as artists' and photographers' go-to software; instead, it's a

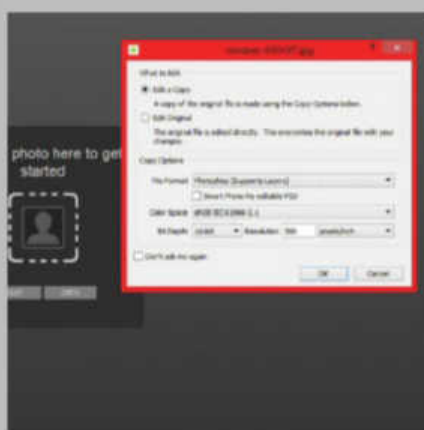
companion to Photoshop and Lightroom, it's an app that can be used alongside either program while you work, or as a plug-in. It's a great concept because it takes the best of an app, and integrates it with the power of the market-leader.

What Perfect Effects 9 offers is worth checking out too. The program looks like a simple alternative to Lightroom; you can start by dragging your pictures into the main interface of the software, and there you'll see various preset filters that you can apply to your work. Rather like actions, these can cut a few corners if you're used to applying HDR to your



BASIC ADJUSTMENTS

GET TO GRIPS WITH PERFECT EFFECTS AND MASTER HOW TO EDIT YOUR PHOTOS WITH THE PROGRAM



01 DRAG YOUR IMAGES

Perfect Effects has a classy-looking opening screen that provides a user-friendly way to drop your images straight onto the program. Here, you'll be able to either edit your original artwork, or a copy, and you can change colour settings and file formats too.



02 APPLY EFFECTS

Perfect Effects offers a whole host of effects from simple monochrome ones to more advanced and exciting HDR filters, and even just colourful tints to add to your photos. Layer them up as you like, and experiment with whichever ones you feel complement your picture.



03 MASK YOUR IMAGES

Just as in Photoshop, much of the perfecting is in the masking with Perfect Effects. The masking options are between the left-hand presets and the preview window; they include the ability to simply brush masks away, use gradients or even use vector-based masks. Mask away the effects that you create with your presets to focus your effect.

“It's reliable, great to use with bulk-editing and it provides some lovely tints for your work... Well worth a download”

shots or finishing up a composition with a cool texture. There are a fair few really useful filters that you can apply to your work, such as the Noise Reductions, Sharpening and Vignettes, and it's useful that you can add a number of them to your work.

If you're looking for deeper cuts though, Perfect Effects 9 can be quite limiting. It's great for building up your work with filters and textures, but it's not an in-depth editor. You can

mask and blend these filters, but the program starts and ends with quick fixes unfortunately.

That's not to say that Perfect Effects 9 can't quickly become a regular app for touching up your pictures; it's reliable, great to use with bulk-editing and it provides some lovely tints for your work. The plug-in for Photoshop is well worth a download, whether you're looking to retouch a start picture or complete a finished piece of work.

VERDICT

Features: **7/10**

Ease of use: **10/10**

Quality of results: **7/10**

Value for money: **9/10**

FINAL SCORE: 8/10

A solid piece of software to use alongside Photoshop, Perfect Effects is useful not only for photographers, but also for artists and designers too

STRETCH YOURSELF

RODRIGO MARINELLI IS A SENIOR ART DIRECTOR AT THE ADVERTISING AGENCY TAGCOM IN BRAZIL. TO KEEP IMPROVING HIS TECHNIQUE, HE CHALLENGES HIMSELF TO CREATE ONE PERSONAL IMAGE A MONTH

By day he's an art director, but Brazilian artist Rodrigo Marinelli doesn't take any downtime from improving his artwork, challenging himself to make at least one highly polished personal piece every month. We caught up with him to find out more.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE?

I always try to create images that challenge me and generate curiosity. I like to merge fantasy with reality, always paying attention to the details. I have a vibrant style, that's why I take care in the choice of colours and pictures to make the perfect composition.

I always liked a glossy style. In my compositions I like to use many pictures, and I always like to explore the lights and shadows as much as I can. I think these details are what make my images believable, even

though when you know that scene will never exist. In this case there is no trick to know how much to put in, what makes the difference is your daily practice and not being afraid of making mistakes. All my work is the result of many light, shadow and composition tests. Don't be afraid to take risks, this is the only way to improve your art direction style.

HOW AND WHEN DID YOU FIRST START USING PHOTOSHOP?

For me Photoshop is an old flame. To work in advertising you have to know how Photoshop works, so I started using it ten years ago when I was a trainee. I had the luck to work with talented people who taught me how to use the right tools. They helped me a lot to be able to develop my own art direction style. I also use InDesign and Illustrator, but less.



OUR READER
RODRIGO MARINELLI

http://rodrigo_marinelli.prosite.com/



Relax Clock: "In this image I wanted to represent that although we all work really hard, we can't forget to have time to relax," explains Marinelli

All article images © Rodrigo Marinelli

“ Usually the day before, I will have checked my job list for the next day, so when I start my day job I already know exactly what to do ”



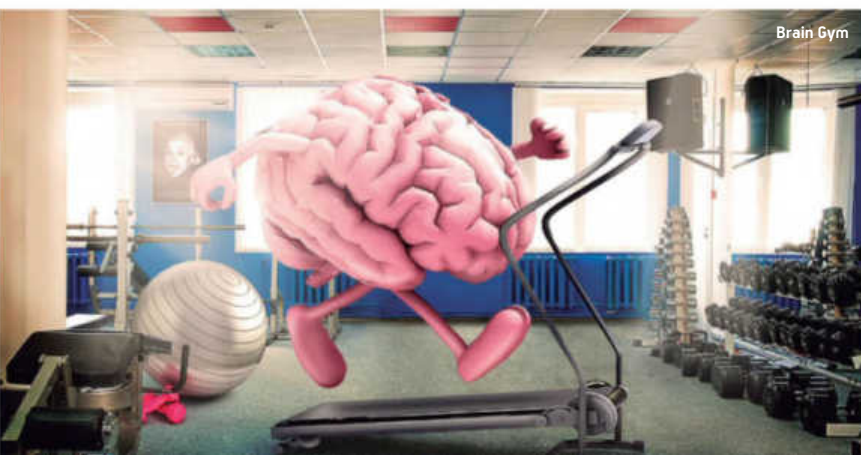
Crocodile: Marinelli's wife gave him the idea of a scared person passing close to crocs, and the big challenge was creating "realistic water splashes from the crocodile's mouth"



Giraffe



Metal Heart: "One of my greatest passions is music," says Marinelli, "and there's nothing better when you hear your favourite song. It's like your heart is playing with the music"



Brain Gym



Rhino: Marinelli made this image for a contest, with the intention of "showing to the world the dangers of extinction of rhinos"



“ I always try to create images that challenge me and generate curiosity. I like to merge fantasy with reality, always paying attention to the details ”

WHAT'S A TYPICAL WORK DAY FOR YOU?

I start at the agency at 9:00 AM. Whenever I can, I reserve at least 30 minutes of my morning to read the news, sports and see design references. After that I put my headphones on and get to work.

Usually the day before, I will have checked my job list for the next day, so when I start my day job I already know exactly what to do. During the day, I try to be very focused on the job that I'm developing. I stop just a few moments to rest. This is very important because when I go back, I can have a better view of details and improve the work that I was doing.

I like to work in an advertising agency because every day I need to be creative and this reflects directly in my work. An ad agency has several specialties; mine is the art direction, when the idea is approved my job is to build the image that was imagined by the creative.

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR CAREER HIGHLIGHTS (SO FAR)?

In my ten years of experience I won three awards. One of the them is called Top Rac, I won the silver prize in the car advertising category. The other award is called Media Fest and in this I won two golds, one in the category of integrated campaign and another in the category of brand design.

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE OR MOST-USED PHOTOSHOP FEATURES?

There are several tools that I like to use, but my favorite is the mask, because I can edit and manipulate photos without losing any information. I use the Feather tool a lot; it's perfect to make compositions. It's the first step to make a composition in a harmonic way. I also like the Gaussian blur a lot, I use this tool for everything, to make shadows and lights, or dissemble little defects of the image. My trick is to always use the Unsharp Mask, this tool brings more detail and reality to your image. But you must be very careful because if you exaggerate you will give an artificial style.

WHO OR WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

My biggest inspiration in my personal life is my family and my wife, who always encourages and supports me in my decisions. Professionally my inspiration comes from the big photomanipulation and 3D studios around the world, every day I try to see their work to learn more. Another factor that inspires me is the challenge of always doing a better job than the last one; the challenge to overcome is the key to professional success.

WHAT IS IT ABOUT DIGITAL ART AND PHOTOMANIPULATION THAT YOU FIND MOST EXCITING?

For me what makes an exciting piece of art is when you have a great idea that mixes fantasy with reality. It's great when you are surprised by an unusual image; it always expands your creative potential.



Pinball

DESIGN TIPS

As Marinelli points out, to work in advertising, you have to know Photoshop inside out. But that's not the only thing that'll determine whether you succeed. His advice is to "Try to create at least one new image per month. A good job is the result of many hours of practice. It's always necessary to learn more to develop your technique."

"Work hard, but don't forget to relax," he adds. "Your brain is not a machine and tiredness is the worst enemy of creativity." But most importantly, Marinelli stresses you must always be open to "learning more, because this is the only way to power up your creativity."

Water Guitar: Water guitar is an early image of Marinelli's. He created it for a contest and "learned a lot about lighting and image manipulation"



GATHER THE PROJECT MATERIALS

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES FOR INK SWIRL BRUSHES

Large fish tank: This is important especially if you want large, wide spreading ink swirls. Be sure it has flat sides

White backdrop: Have some white surrounding the tank to keep the reflections to a minimum. It also gives a clean background to the ink

Paper towels: You will need plenty. You will need to wipe the tank whenever you have splashes or drops on the glass

India ink: Any black or dark-coloured ink will work as long as you have a dropper to go with it

CREATE YOUR OWN INK SWIRL BRUSHES

LEARN HOW TO MAKE INK SWIRL BRUSHES FOR TRADITIONAL ART EFFECTS

Few things are as unforgiving as ink; it stains with a vengeance and is often more trouble than it's worth. However, like many dark, seemingly destructive objects, it has its beautiful and useful side. In this tutorial, you will learn how to use black ink to create multiple types of

brushes to be used in your Photoshop arsenal. From the magic of swirling ink in water, to the simplicity of an ink splash, to the mystery of the ink blot test, these brushes are sure to be fun to both make and use. The darkness of the black ink makes it ideal for brushes, and because it's readily available

at craft stores, it can be used over and over for multiple purposes. Ink has always had power in the physical world, from books and printing, to drawing and sketching. Now you can bring that same power into the digital realm with only a few materials and a little creativity.

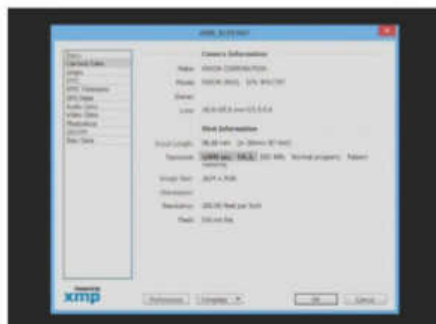
MAGICAL INK SWIRLS IN WATER

DISCOVER HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH INK IN WATER TO CREATE MAGICAL SWIRLS



01 GET SET UP

Setting up the scene correctly is very important before you begin taking pictures. Be sure you have white surrounding your tank of water and have your camera at the correct angle to avoid reflections.



02 PICK THE RIGHT SETTINGS

Ink in water is not particularly fast moving, however the image needs to be perfectly crisp to be usable, so use at least a shutter speed of 1/400. The aperture can be at a mid-range of f5.6-f8 depending on the light.

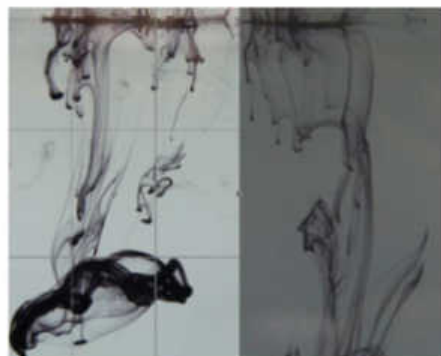


03 INITIATE DROP SEQUENCE

Once prepped, set up your camera and frame the shot. If you don't have an assistant, use a shutter release button to capture shots. You will need to get clean water every few drops to keep the contrast.

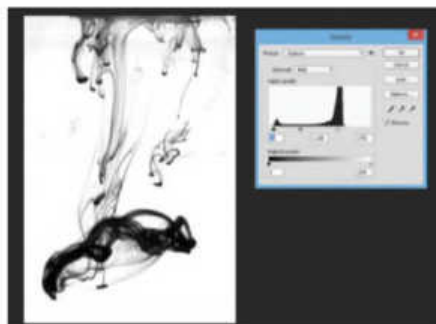
EDIT INK SWIRLS IN PHOTOSHOP

TURN YOUR INK SWIRL PHOTOS INTO PHOTOSHOP BRUSHES



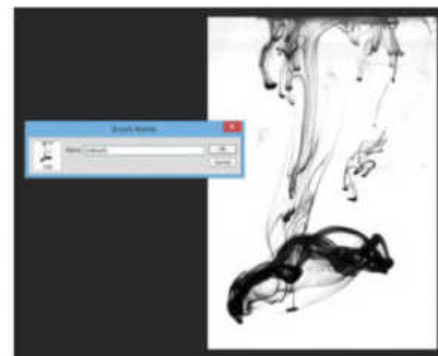
01 CROP IT OUT

You may have multiple drops close together in one frame, so crop to just the drop you want for a brush. Remember, the less detail in the brush, the easier it will be to apply without adjustments.



02 BRIGHTEN IT UP

Use the Levels dialogue to brighten the white as much as possible. You can also adjust the transparency of the ink here by adjusting the Midtones slider. Remember what's black will be the solid part of the brush.




03 BRUSH IT OFF

Under the Edit menu, select Define Brush Preset. This will turn your image into a brush. Make sure your images start out high enough quality to deliver a sharp brush even at a large size.

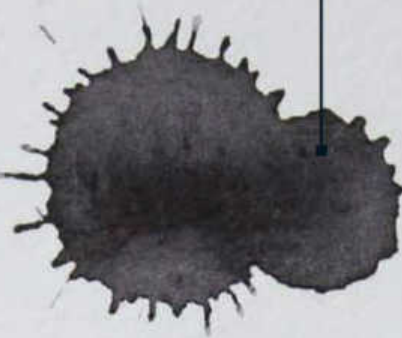
TYPES OF INK DROPS

OTHER WAYS INK CAN BE USED FOR BRUSHES


Since ink, especially black ink, is so dark, it is perfect for use in making Photoshop brushes. Here are some techniques to make interesting ink splashes to be used as brushes.




Drop the ink from high above the paper to create a splattered ink drop. You don't need much ink for this, just one drop, and the brush will be dark and opaque



If you don't want 100 per cent opaque brushes, simply dilute the ink with some water before dropping it on the page. If used on watercolour paper, you will have some texture too



Drop from close to the page for a slightly irregular circle shape; this is useful for painting textures or anything where a perfectly round brush is just too artificial looking



Use a straw to blow your ink drop around on the page to form tree-like forms. These are fun and random and can be used in many artistic ways

USING THE INK SWIRL RESOURCES

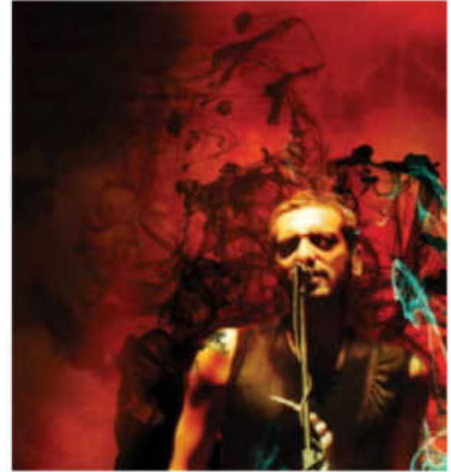
ENHANCE CONCERT PHOTOS WITH INK SWIRLS

Inky swirls are a beautiful digital asset that can be used to add an energetic visual detail to your compositions. The trick is to stop thinking of them as a liquid, or fluid substance. See them as potential smoke or light images, and entirely new possibilities open up.

Here we created a stunning inky light effect out of a concert shot. This gives the image a very energetic, otherworldly appearance. The primary process is to use a single brush stamp on a layer and make adjustments to blending modes, transformations and layer masks. The process is remarkably easy to

accomplish, and very fluid. Experiment with different colours, brushes, and blends to create your very own energy ink effect!

We also included a video tutorial that walks through each step in creating the Ink Rocker here. Check the FileSilo to download the video and follow along.



■ **RORSCHACH BLOT TEST**
HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN RORSCHACH BLOT ART



01 | GATHER MATERIALS
Start with some sheets of watercolour paper, this makes the process much easier. Also have some india ink, and a dropper. You will also need a hairdryer or a sunny day to speed drying time.



02 | DROP THE INK
On one side of the watercolour paper, drip some ink in a random pattern. Be aware that the ink spreads a lot, so the more ink you add, the more globular your design will be.



03 | LET THE MAGIC HAPPEN
Fold the paper in half on the fold line like a card. Use your hand to rub the outside, getting the ink dispersed. Then unfold and let dry while you admire your design.



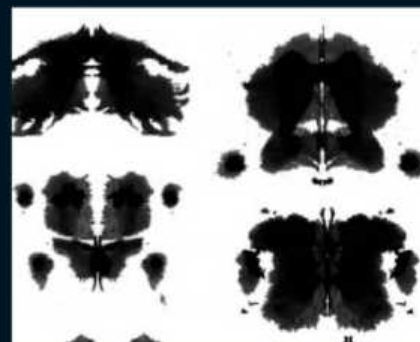
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20 INK SWIRL BRUSHES

LIQUIDY, INKY SWIRLS

We hope you've been able to capture your own inky resources, but we've also offered ours for your own personal use.

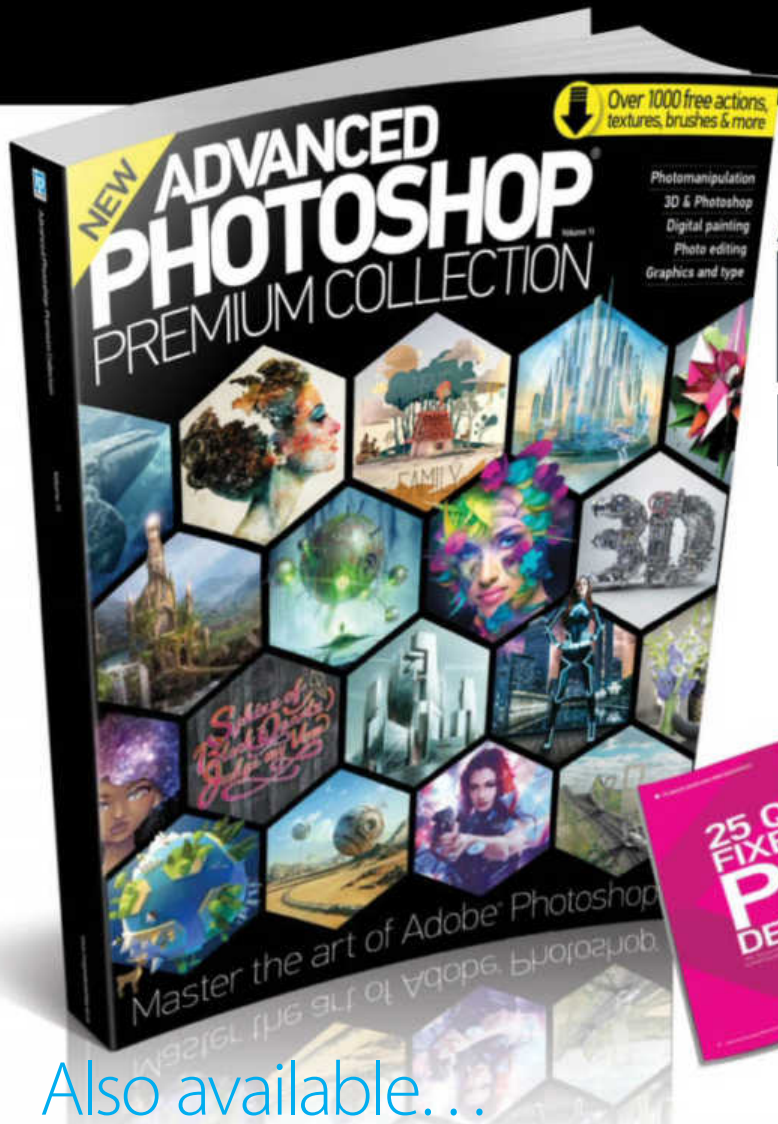


6 RORSCHACH BLOT BRUSHES

WHAT DO YOU SEE HERE?

Use these fun inkblot brushes to add a nice grunge effect to backgrounds or other elements in your digital compositions.

From the makers of **ADVANCED PHOTOSHOP**

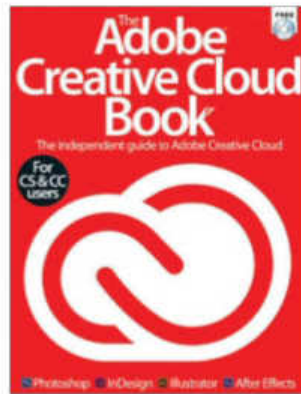


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